

**Troubled Journeys:
An Analysis
of
Women's Reality and Experience
within
New Zealand Gangs**

**A thesis
submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
in
Sociology
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by
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DEDICATION.

Troubled Journeys is dedicated to 'Pet', a friend and extended family member whose tragic death stays with me, her family, and those that care. I never forget her friendship, her honesty and her warm, sunny smile. Her memory inspires and reinforces my drive to push for change.

*Me titiro whakamuri tatou
Kia mohia ai
Me pehea haere ki mua*

*We should look backwards
so that we can determine
how to go forward.*

It is also dedicated to the many people whose support and understanding enabled me to make profound changes, for the better, in my own life, and thus have enabled me to transform my own *Troubled Journey* into something of value that hopefully will promote understanding and positive changes in other people's lives. While the list of people is too long to mention in totality, particular gratitude is extended to Alistair Lester for just being himself and being there, beyond the call of duty, to Patsy Colquhoun and other refuge advocates who made my healing easier, to Tania and Daniel Matakī who provided loving support for my children, to friends and mentors who hung in there and to Mum, Daphne and Neville who never gave up hope,

Thank you.

*Takiri ake te awatea,
korihi ake nga manu,
whiti mai te ra i te pae.
Hei whakaoho i taku moe.*

*The dawn breaks,
the birds sing,
the sun shines upon the horizon
to awaken me from my sleep.*

*What can you do to wake yourself from the sleep,
that stops you from having all that your heart desires?*

(Ruth Tai, 1992)

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ABSTRACT

New Zealand's gangs are known as staunch male domains, yet women have been involved since gangs were conceived, as partners of gang members or unattached associates. Research in this area is sporadic and limited, with focus skewed towards male involvement. This qualitative study sets out to increase understandings about women's involvement.

Semi-structured, conversational interviews were carried out with women who have had experience in gangs and the data obtained were supplemented with information from gang members, associates, police, social service workers and the literature on gangs. Thematic analyses, covering the women's family backgrounds, their motivations towards gangs and their members, and women's socialisation into the gang structures, were carried out. Similarly, the role of women in gangs was examined, as too were the power and control tactics - ranging from subtle intimidation and abuse to extreme violence and gang rape - that were employed to ensure women knew their place. Women's coping strategies, their decisions to leave a gang member partner or the gang scene, and the leaving process have been outlined.

Overall the findings support international data on female gang involvement. The women interviewed tended to come from families that did not provide security or a sense of belonging. For many, gangs were an escape from the traumatic family circumstances. Gangs provided a form of protection from domestic/family violence, and physical/sexual abuse. For others, gangs offered excitement, fun and adventure. For most of the women interviewed, however, their escape from abuse or drudgery turned into a cavern of despair. In general, these women were forced into a submissive subservient role under the threat of violence. The violence was so great that the coping strategies women employed to create personal safety in these violence-prone contexts, actually worked to maintain the unequal and abusive treatment of women in gangs. In the case of these women, the final survival strategy was eventually to decide to leave the gang altogether.

PREAMBLE.

I got out of hospital in March 1991. Five months later, I went back to the old house for one last look. A strange, uneasy feeling crept through my body as I realised that the years, months, and days of living in hell were finally over. I shuddered when I stood and looked around the bloodstained floor and wallpaper, the broken furniture and the holes in the walls. Someone had been in and had tried to clean up the place, but my blood, which had been splattered about the room as I had tried to avoid those angry blows, had seeped into the uncovered floorboards. Having dried and turned almost black, the blood remained as a reminder of my journey through 'Gangland', the complex and contradictory world in which my estranged (and now ex-) husband had become entwined. In desperation, I got some water and bleach to try and remove the bloodstains.

As I scrubbed the floor, my tears merging with the cleaning fluids, I wondered how I managed to get myself into this mess in the first place. Part of me wanted to obliterate the past, to get rid of those awful, painful memories that had consumed my mind and being at that time. Another part of me, the rebel who finds it hard to give in, wanted to accept the challenge of a male doctor that I could, if I so chose, rise up to face my demons and turn them into something positive - not just for myself, but for others who walk or have walked a similar path. I began to reflect on how my life had changed so dramatically over the past few months. My thoughts, no longer distorted by the effects of violence or through sheer terror, began to focus on the choices I had taken and the progress I had made towards a new type of life.

That autumn day in 1991, when I was admitted to hospital, I decided not to return home. To do so would have resulted in further assaults or, as I truly believed, the likelihood of my own death. The police, who had been called to the hospital, aired similar views and made some reference to the morgue being my next, most probable, port of call. While the barrage of questions, and advice given that day have long gone from my memory, one response that I made in return remains vividly clear as if it was yesterday. I told a young policeman, "I don't care what you do with him, just keep him away from me." With that the policeman withdrew and called Detective Alistair Lester of the Christchurch Police, Criminal Intelligence Section to my side.

For about four hours, Alistair listened to me, and he appeared to understand my dilemma. He acknowledged my worst fears and assured me that he would do his utmost to keep me safe and ensure my partner never assaulted me again. Although I doubted his ability to do this at that time, I accepted his advice and support. I am now glad that I did. I was tired then, and my energy was so depleted that suicide had become a serious consideration. I knew that I could no longer cope on my own. I had previously considered the possibility of serving a life sentence for taking the extreme measure, but the thought of having to explain it to my children was just too difficult to contemplate. Within a few hours of my speaking to him, Alistair had arranged extra security at the hospital, he had organised suitable care for three of my children, and he had arrested my husband and charged him with wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. I remained in hospital for a few days and upon discharge I moved into a Women's Refuge safe house, also arranged by Alistair.

I lived in the refuge for five months and my children were cared for elsewhere. Although I became stronger and more independent during that time, Alistair continued to provide support and encouragement, even on his rostered days off work, for which I was, and still am, very grateful. This support continued through the High Court trial, after which the Judge made my ex-husband a Special Patient under section 115(1)(b) of the Criminal Justice Act 1985. He was placed in a psychiatric hospital under a compulsory treatment order for a considerable term. Although my ex-husband is now living in the community he still is monitored in accordance with the Mental Health Act 1992.

During my stay in the refuge I learned a lot about male violence towards women and I developed an understanding of the dynamics of power and control, most of which relates to violence within intimate relationships. Within a short period, having attended personal counselling, an assertiveness training course and a self-esteem building programme, I noted that the factors relating to gang life that had influenced some of my ex-husband's actions were not being addressed in any of the courses or during the counselling sessions. I had many unanswered questions. For example, how did the gang become so central in my partner's life? Why did I ignore my own feelings and accept explanations about gang violence and rape that I did not believe? How did the gang influence my thinking? And, why was I so concerned about how other gang members perceived his arrest?

With such questions in my mind, I returned to school and completed Sixth Form Certificate in psychology, and in social and applied psychology. On finding social psychology a fascinating subject, I followed my tutor's recommendations and enrolled at university in 1994 taking papers in psychology and sociology. My connections with refuge continued through volunteer work as an advocate and I became an accredited worker within Stopping Violence Services, formerly the Men's Violence Project, where I started working with men who had been violent and/or abusive in their relationships. During my first year of study at university I found that a sociological analysis of my situation provided the additional insights that I needed to satisfy that 'need to know' feeling, which had motivated my learning to that point. Four years later, I had completed a B.A. (Hons.) degree majoring in sociology and found myself contemplating a topic for this thesis research project. A number of options evoked my interest, but nothing seemed to motivate me enough to seriously begin another year's study.

I found myself in a void and aimlessly I watched the television set when an item on the *Holmes Show* in October 1997, caught my eye. The discussion at hand focused on a number of ex-gang members who were trying to make positive changes in their lives. The men talked about their lives and their use of violence towards their partners, among other things. Their energy for change provided the inspiration behind the current thesis project and gave me a base from which I could work on the challenge to turn my own personal tragedies into something positive that, I hope, will eventually help others make changes in their own lives. This thesis then is a partial fulfilment of that challenge.

Rightly or wrongly, I believe that personal changes can best be made permanent when a problem is understood from a number of angles. This means that the problem has to be explored from various positions within the social context in which the problem is sustained. The ex-gang members interviewed on the *Holmes Show* acknowledged the issue of male violence within the gang structures as being problematic, and they recognised its consequences on their lives. But I felt that they had no real understanding of the effects of their violence on the women they had abused. The data presented in this study, taken from interviews with ten women who have had life experiences within various gang subcultures in New Zealand, is an attempt to widen the understandings that already exist on gang life in the general sense.

The range of gangs that these women were connected with, in no particular order, include: the Mongrel Mob, Black Power, Highway 61, the Road Knights, the Filthy Few, the Stormtroopers and the Mothers. I have attempted to draw together the women's understandings and their sense of reality with that of my own in order to present a perspective on New Zealand gang life that has, generally, been hidden from view.

Personal Rationale for this Thesis.

*Because I care, I feel, I hurt.
Because I felt the pain, the fear.
Because I struggled, I wept, I prayed.
But no one understood.*

*Because I care, I feel, I hurt.
Because others feel the pain, the fear.
Because others struggle, they weep, they pray.
And wish to be understood.*

*Because I care, I feel, I hurt.
Because children feel the pain, the fear.
Because children struggle, they weep, they pray.
And cannot be understood.*

*Because the cycle repeats itself everyday.
If only others understood.*

The rationale for this thesis thus emerges from both my own brief associations with a New Zealand motorcycle gang and my involvement in community agencies that support the victims and the perpetrators of violence when they attempt to make positive changes in their lives. In discussions with colleagues, social workers and community workers it has become clear that knowledge about life within the gang context is generally sparse and extremely limited. Even less is known about the experiences of women within gang cultures, which makes the delivery of social services for such women difficult (Mackay, 1998; McCreanor, 1997). Without an understanding of the dynamics operating within the gangs and an awareness of the impact these dynamics have on the women concerned, the advice and support provided by social service agencies and the like, may further endanger the gang-associated woman, placing her at greater risk. As a result the women may find it difficult to seek further assistance simply because the workers involved do not seem to understand or cannot provide a reassuring response in terms of the safety issues involved.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.

Although by their very nature, gang dynamics and culture will always be obscure, in America, gangs have been under the eye of social researchers for many years. While observations about gangs were noted earlier (see Spergel, 1995, pp.3-9), sociologists of the 1920s, such as Clifford Shaw, Henry McKay, and Frederic Thrasher at the University of Chicago, feature prominently in the historical roots of gang research (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996, p.3; Vigil & Long, 1991, p.55; Siegel & Senna, 1997, p.326). Thrasher's (1963) famous contribution was *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago*, published in 1927 and 1936, and revised in 1963. Shaw and McKay, who studied aspects of delinquency from the 1920s, generated further insights into gang developments by noting that the structural conditions – poverty, poor or insufficient housing, low-paying jobs, low levels of education, and widespread discrimination – facilitated the rise of gangs in the Chicago area (see Shaw & McKay, 1943; Vigil & Long, 1991, p.55; Siegel & Senna, 1997, p.326). Soon other social researchers began to focus on gangs. Whyte's work on the slum society culminated in the well-known book *Street Corner Society* (1943 & 1955) and Albert Cohen's book, *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang* followed in 1955. Many other acclaimed researchers have followed. Walter Miller (1958 & 1973), Cloward and Ohlin (1960), Spergel (1964, 1966, 1969), Short & Strodtbeck (1965), and Klein (1967, 1971) among others, have all developed bases for understanding gang dynamics that continue to inform scholars right up to the present day.

Throughout the 1990s, many publications have helped to broaden both an interest in, and an understanding of, gang dynamics and culture. For example, Huff's *Gangs in America* (1990) presents an "up-to-date overview of research" (Huff, 1990, p.25) and covers a number of theoretical issues and social policy discussions on gangs. Sanders' book *Gangbangers and Drive-Bys: Grounded Culture and Juvenile Gang Violence*, (1994) presents a theoretical discussion on gang violence. Spergel (1995) discusses gang policy and intervention programmes and strategies in *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach*. This book clearly illustrates the complex nature of the gang problem in America and discusses some of the attempts taken to counter it. For Decker and Van Winkle, three years of study and fieldwork with 99 active gang members and their families culminated in the publication of *Life in the Gang: Family Friends, and Violence* (1996). This research documentation focuses on "individual, organisational and institutional aspects of gang membership" (ibid, cover

statement) and draws in the views of family members to provide valuable insights into gang members' lives and interpersonal relationships. Alongside many other similar publications, this background work supports social researchers in their understandings of gangs as we enter the new millennium.

Beside the academic endeavours, journalists, too, have contributed to the understanding of gangs. The classic work of Hunter S. Thompson is one. His book *Hell's Angels* (1967), although it reads like a popular thriller, provides a window through which we may glimpse life within this infamous motorcycle gang. Thompson's discussion and description of gang rape, gang murders, gang crimes, and other 'horrors' generally hidden from view leaves an unsettled feeling for the many who read these public revelations. Nevertheless, through it our understanding of the more notorious motorcycle gangs is dramatically increased. Subsequently, Yves Lavigne presented a comprehensive overview of the Hell's Angels in his book titled *Hell's Angels: Taking Care of Business*, which was published in 1986. Having covered a wide range of themes; for example, the club's philosophy and structure, the club's expansion throughout the world, coverage of their business ventures, and their treatment of women, this book serves as a useful resource when examining other gangs that have attempted to emulate the Hell's Angels. Having this background knowledge is important when we look at the question of organised crime. Like the work on youth gangs outlined above, this background work, complemented by law enforcement reports on criminal gangs (for example, Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, 1998; RCMP Organised Crime Initiative, 1998), provide valuable additional data for the gang researcher.

Research on Women in Gangs.

Prior to the 1960s and 1970s women were seldom considered in the literature on gangs. Like elsewhere in society, women in gangs were considered marginal to the men and only worthy of passing mention. Although a number of studies that focused attention on women's involvement in gangs began to emerge between the 1960s and 1970s, the role of women was inevitably depicted as marginal. Where researchers had acknowledged the existence of independent female gangs with leadership and structures similar to the male gangs, the girl gangs were considered to be affiliated to, and largely dependent on, their male counterparts. And while it is true that these female groups were involved in violent incidents and criminal activity, the reports state that their involvement was/is minor when contrasted with that of the men's (see Rice, 1963; Hanson, 1964; Miller, 1973; & Brown, 1977 all cited in both

Campbell, 1984, pp.21-220; & Curry, 1998, p.2 of 13).

Previous research has recognised that girls in gangs hold vastly different view, about their lives and behaviours from those of people in their local neighbourhood. For example, in 1973 Walter Miller, who studied an American group of mostly white Irish Catholic girls known as the 'Molls', wrote:

To most neighborhood adults, it was axiomatic that girls who were "bad" after the fashion of the Molls must also be sexually "bad." The Molls resented the lumping together of sexual immorality and what they regarded as conventional illegal behavior. The same girl who boasted of being a real gang girl, fondly reminiscing at 16 of her gang's misbehavior at 14, said, "But we never was really *bad* – not in *that* [sexual] way...."

(Miller, 1973, p.32)

Instead, Miller argued, the Molls were more likely to be involved in truancy, theft, drinking offences and property damage than assaults or sex offences. He also suggested that the life these young girls chose merely reflected the "customary" (ibid, p.35) or traditional behaviour patterns of other women, particularly the lower status, urban adolescents, at the time.

Since Miller's day and with the increase of interest in gangs by feminist scholars, there has been a gradual increase in research on female gang involvement. Notably, during the early 1980s, Ann Campbell (1984, p.1) argued for the need to redress the male-orientated view of women's involvement in gangs, and like many female scholars who have followed her, she *went to* the women in gangs to gain insights into gang life. Campbell's conclusions were not too dissimilar from those of Miller's. Having researched and presented the biographies of three girls from separate gangs, she found that:

The gang was no alternative life for them. It was a microcosm of the society beyond. Granted, it was one that had a public image of rebellion and excitement and offered a period of distraction (discussions of gang feuds and honor and death). But in the end, gang or no gang, the girls remained alone with their children, still trapped in poverty and in a cultural dictate of womanhood from which there was no escape.

(Campbell, 1984, p.266)

Within the gang, as within the wider social environment, Campbell found that girls and women were still bound by traditional gender roles and the 'good girl' versus 'bad girl' images that worked to control women's lives. Despite the rise in feminist research strategies,

the same still holds today. Some of the old myths, however, have been dispersed as greater understanding has evolved. As much of the data gathered in this area are gang or community specific, and/or the data have been collected through a small number of gang members and their affiliates, broad generalisations have been generally unobtainable. But as the data have begun to accumulate and findings from comparative studies emerge, some interesting similarities between gangs can be recognised.

Much of the research on women involvement in gangs has concentrated on eight principal areas. Some researchers have explored the interplay between ethnicity, class and gender in female gang involvement and activity (for example Campbell, 1987, pp.454-456; Fishman, 1998; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995; Moore, 1991), while others have focused on women's involvement in gang-related criminal activity (see Brotherton, 1996; Giordano, 1978; Swart, 1991). Some researchers have examined the media representation of women in gangs (for example, Chesney-Lind, 1993; & 1997.), and others present discussions on the 'treatment focus' or social policy developments (for example, Cunningham, 1994; Hixon, 1999; Spergel, 1995). Researchers have presented much data on the risk factors that lead to women's involvement in gangs, the role of women in gangs, and the gender dynamics that operate in gangs. And some of the data highlight women's experiences of, and involvement in violence (Bowker, & Klein, 1983, pp.748-750; Cunningham, 1994, pp.1-3, 5 of 6; Ferreira-Pinto et al, 1997, pp.112-115; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995, p.416; Portillos & Zatz, 1995 cited in Chesney-Lind, 1997, p.51; Thompson & Braaten-Antrim, 1998, pp. 9-10 of 13). As we shall see, it is these themes that relate well to the current study.

Previous literature relevant to the present project notes that girls/women with an ongoing involvement in gangs tend to come from troubled backgrounds in which a weak family structure and instability force refuge in a new 'family' – the gang. The girls/women particularly vulnerable are those with homes that have been in chronic crisis, resulting from economic hardship, a prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse, single parenthood, marital discord, domestic violence, and/or sexual abuse. Also at risk are those with parental, sibling and/or other family members who have continuing involvement with gangs (see Bowker, & Klein, 1983, pp.748-750; Cunningham, 1994, pp.1-3, 5 of 6; Ferreira-Pinto et al, 1997, pp.112-115; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995, p.416; Portillos & Zatz, 1995 cited in Chesney-Lind, 1997, p.51; Thompson & Braaten-Antrim, 1998, pp. 9-10 of 13). Other risk factors include low or limited educational attainment and dropping out of the school system at an early age

(Campbell, 1984, p.34; Joe Laidler, & Hunt, 1997, p.152; Maxson, Whitlock & Klein, 1998, pp.7 & 9 of 11; Molidor, 1996a, p.252-253).

In isolation, each of the above factors might be rendered statistically insignificant, but they tend to occur together and when compounded, the degree of risk escalates and increases the probability of gang involvement. Frequent sexual and physical abuse, and/or repetitive bouts of maltreatment within the family context are also known to increase the likelihood of gang affiliation (Ferreira-Pinto et al, 1997, pp.112-113; Miller, 1998a, p.5 of 15; Molidor, 1996a, p.253; Thompson & Braaten-Antrim, 1998, p.8 of 14). And it has been noted that women in gangs tend to have “disproportionate histories of victimization before gang involvement as compared with nongang females” (Miller 1996 cited in Miller, 1998a, p.1 of 15).

Inevitably, the family and educational factors that contribute to low self-esteem and other psychological conditions, merge with social, cultural and ethnic factors. These also facilitate movement towards gang membership and association (Thompson & Braaten-Antrim, 1998, p.9 of 14; Spergel, 1995, p.61-62). Campbell (1984, p.33) notes that gangs are a phenomenon that emerge “from conditions poverty and alienation common to those at the lowest levels of urban life.” Much of the research carried out on girls/women’s involvement in gangs, find that the participants tend to come from similar social backgrounds. The reports often refer to lower middle class, working class and underclass areas with high unemployment, where parents are often involved in low-paid semi or unskilled employment. And the people within these areas have experienced social dislocation, status frustration, boredom and anomie (Bowker & Klein, 1983, p.743; Curry, 1998, pp.7-8 of 13; Giordano, 1978, p.129; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995, pp.409-411, 418-419; Joe Laidler & Hunt, 1997, pp. 149-154; Moore, 1991, pp. 115, 120-124).

While it is known that gangs offer an escape from the inequalities in the wider social structure and relative freedom from parental confines and abuses, most of the gangs covered in the literature depict girls/women in a subservient position. The role of women, more often than not, has been presented as marginal with the girls/women securely positioned within traditional gender roles. That is, women tend to be the child carers and seem to have more influence over their children than the men do. The most acceptable female gang role still tends to be that of ‘the good wife and mother’. Sexual promiscuity is frowned upon and sometimes punished. Women tend to be in secondary, or subservient positions to those of men

and in many instances, the women learn ways to defend themselves against the abuses of their men (Fishman, 1995, cited in Chesney-Lind, Sheldon & Joe, 1996, p.197-19; Hopper & Moore, 1990, pp.371-372; Moore & Hagedorn, 1996, p.211-212; Miller, 1998b, p.1; Moore, 1991, p.136; Swart, 1991, p.44-51; Young & Craig, 1997, pp.12-15 of 23). Furthermore, the oppression of women in gangs is still continuing even as greater gender equality is being won within the wider community. There appears to be little evidence that the rise of feminism and women's rights movements have impacted on gang life to any great degree.

Some researchers have begun to examine the gender dynamics operating within gangs and have sought to understand how women in gangs make sense of their oppression and the inequalities that they experience (see Campbell, 1987; Miller, 1998a; Miller, 1998b; Swart, 1991). Jody Miller (1998b, p.6) argued that:

Young women in gangs live in worlds where gender oppression is both fierce and highly visible. Many have been victimized themselves, or know other women in their lives who have been. Though the gang reproduces some of these structures of gender inequality, it also provides some normative space for equality, at least in theory.

Unfortunately, the notion of equality that many young women adopted was not one that encouraged solidarity with other young women, but instead a version suggesting that females with the 'right stuff' could be accepted as "one of the boyz."
(ibid, pp.27-28)

As will be explained in more detail later, women who are able to produce the 'right stuff' or play by the rules of the game, in this case the boys' game, can create a relatively safe space for themselves within the gang context. The 'right' actions, justifications and beliefs used in playing the game also enable some gang women to minimise their own risk of male violence. But while gang women compromise, strategise or participate in *patriarchal bargains* in exchange for some personal respite and relative safety, they actually collude with and support the overall abuse of women in gangs and the inequalities that exist. This leaves gang-related women in a very contradictory position.

The fact that gangs are violence prone has been well documented over the years (see Ferreira-Pinto et al, 1997; Lavigne, 1987; Hopper & Moore, 1990; Molidor, 1996a; Sanders, 1994; Thompson, 1967), and needs little discussion here. Much of this literature is male orientated and contributes only a scarce mention of how women experience and make sense of gang violence. One of the purposes of the current research is to address this deficiency. But first, it

is helpful to reflect on the New Zealand literature on gangs.

The New Zealand Literature.

In New Zealand, research on gangs has been limited, partly because gang members have traditionally blocked access to social researchers. Of the studies completed only a few are based on information gained directly from gang members and their associates. This means that there are few data available that can provide a basis for understanding gang life and dynamics in this country, apart from the work on youth and delinquency (see Shuker et al, 1990, pp.19-41; Woolford & Law, 1980, pp.115-117). And like elsewhere, by far the vast majority of the research carried out in New Zealand has focused male gang membership and attributed little to the understanding of female involvement (see for example Anastasiou, 1971; Howman, 1971). The research carried out on gangs here has been spasmodic, with most of the resulting data having been obtained through secondary resources, such as the police (see for example Committee on Gangs, 1981; & discussion in Law & Justice Reform Committee, 1997, p.2; Marsh, 1982, pp.11, 22-23; Meek, 1992, p.257.). This means that knowledge about these complex subcultures has remained relatively superficial. These limited understandings have been further distorted by the negative image of gangs that has been fostered by the media (Walker, 1996, p.150).

Recent research has endeavoured to obtain more accurate information by going to the gang members themselves as a means of understanding the diverse and complex nature of the gang world in New Zealand. Kelsey and Young (1982, pp.98-99) sought responses from gang members about their experiences with the justice system, through which the gang members said that they felt “stereotyped and prejudged by people who knew nothing...about the reality of their lives” (ibid, p.98). Edward Marsh (1982) attempted to gain an understanding of gang life by interviewing 17 Mongrel Mob members and 13 Black Power members in two penal institutions. He gathered useful information about why people join these gangs, the recruitment process, gang identity and the gangs’ structures (Marsh, 1982, pp.38-54). He also collected information about the power dynamics that operate within these two gangs (ibid, pp.54-58).

More recently, Susan Manley (1996), in five qualitative interviews with gang members, attempted to gain information and understandings about gang members’ experience with authority. Her findings revealed that “[g]ang interaction with authority is an area fraught with

cultural, and historical misunderstandings” (Manley, 1996, p.17). The gang members interviewed indicated that their experiences flowed and ebbed “around themes of violence, dominance, betrayal, submission and manifestation[s]” (ibid, p.16) of power and powerlessness. Girish Lala (1996) explored the role of the gang in former gang members’ lives. He found that the social psychological theory of self-categorisation, and a model of group socialisation, helped in his exploration of the processes involved as men moved into, and out of the gang. Lala’s data provide insights into gang dynamics and social interaction within Black Power, the Mongrel Mob and the Stormtroopers.

A study carried out by Erin Eggleston (1997, pp.100-114), attempted to interpret concepts of gendered talk through interviews that were held with 43 Auckland based, male gang members aged between 11 and 24 years. The themes explored included the idea that women need looking after, that gangs are for men, and the use of gang slang to degrade women who hang out with gangsters. Eggleston concluded that gangs provide a structure through which disadvantaged males can provide for, and protect women in a way that is similar to that of middle-class males. She further concluded, “gangs are for men” (Eggleston, 1997, p.109) as girls/women are rarely allowed to transcend gang space, particularly in public. Eggleston states that this supports the gang member’s sense of masculinity in that he is doing “a man’s thing in a man’s space” (ibid, p.109). With regards to the degradation of women through the use of gang slang, Eggleston suggests that the men use terms such as ‘bitches’ and ‘ho’s’ as a means to objectify girls/women in the gang scene as sex objects. And that the construction of women in this light makes it easier for the men to use the girls/women as mere sex objects. Furthermore, these constructions of women are transposed into beliefs about women that further support male power in gang structures. As one of Eggleston’s participants said “if they were ladies then they wouldn’t be hanging out with hoods like us. So they’re f----- bitches” (cited in Eggleston, 1997, pp.109-110). These gang members believe gang-related women or the ‘bitches’ need controlling. And as Eggleston illustrates, women’s presence in gangs in the peripheral sense reinforces the male gang members’ concept of masculinity through their ability to control women within the gang scene. As indicated this research was based on the views of men. Only a few writers have attempted to understand the gang from the women’s point of view.

One is Bill Payne, whose insightful book *Staunch: Inside New Zealand’s Gangs* (1997), discusses how difficult it was for him to get an interview with a gang-related woman. When

Payne requested one, a strong refusal made it clear that this was out of bounds. He was not to do so. However, in securing one interview with a gang-related woman whose partner was in prison, and through talking with social service professionals, Payne concluded that gang-related women were under the control of the men and that there were two distinct types of gang women. When discussing the marginalised treatment of women, he wrote:

This kind of treatment showed in the eyes of those women I did speak with - mostly longer-term spouses who, although polite, were ultimately remote. But it was the other kind of woman that fascinated me, the crazy young ones who were willing to do whatever the gang said, in criminal, sexual and even violent matters, just so they could belong.

(Payne, 1997, p.41)

We shall see that Payne's vivid image still fits neatly beside that presented by Thompson over thirty years ago. While these research endeavours provide valuable insights into the gang culture, they too are indisputably male and generate little insight into the life of the gang-related woman. Instead, they give a brief summary of women from the male gang members' view, which on the whole, presents an image of gang-related women as being " 'scrubbers' and 'blocks' " (Marsh, 1982, p.77), who are treated with violence and abuse if they misbehave (Lala, 1996, p.82; Marsh, 1982, pp.77-80).

Paucity of Research on Women's Involvement.

It will be clear from the above that, at both the international and the national level, social researchers have generally ignored the gang-associated woman (Campbell, 1984, p.5; Decker & Van Winkle, 1996, p.81). Anne Campbell, a teacher in social psychology at Rutgers University in New York and the author of *The Girls in the Gang* (1984) highlights the lack of research on this topic when she writes:

Gangs have been discussed in terms of societal structure, class relations, rites of passage in adolescence, group cohesion, ecological pressures, learning mechanisms, even linguistic usage. Yet in most of these accounts...girls are invisible or appear as a footnote, an enigma, an oddity.

(Campbell, 1984, p.5)

Consistent with this view, Irving Spergel, a former street gang worker, and later a professor at the School of Social Science Administration at the University of Chicago, has claimed that we actually know very little about the female gang member or associate when contrasted with the

knowledge of male members. Attention has been focused on the men, he says, which could be due to the fact that males dominate gangs in terms of structure and membership patterns. Spergel claimed that the little we do know about gang-related women is fragmented and sparse, even though women have been involved in gangs since their conception (Spergel, 1995, Cover). The lack of research in this area merely reflects “the problem of ‘invisibility’ of women” (Roberts, 1981, p.7) that is evident throughout the history of social inquiry. Traditionally, social science has been orientated from the male perspective with reality, truth and knowledge having been constructed in that light (Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p.3; Smith, 1987, p.86).

Internationally, the stereotypical image of the delinquent, the gang associate and the criminal still remains. In general, researchers have presented women or girls in gangs as either sexual chattels, or as passive female auxiliaries described as being supportive to the male role and as ‘good’ wives or partners firmly controlled by their men. Conversely, they have been depicted as sex objects and/or ‘tomboys’ who are often rejected and/or misunderstood by other women, parents, social workers, and the male gang members themselves (Swart, 1991, p.43; Chesney-Lind, 1993, p.332-325; Moore, 1991, p.41). This male representation of the female gang member or associate has often been skewed towards the ‘good girl’ versus ‘bad girl’ stereotypical images of women, in accordance to traditional gender roles and expectations. Hunter S. Thompson (1967), for example, categorised women into two distinct frameworks:

There were about fifty girls in camp, but nearly all were ‘old ladies’ – not to be confused, except at serious risk, with ‘mamas’ or ‘strange chicks’. An old lady can be a steady girl friend, a wife or even some bawdy hustler that one of the outlaws has taken a liking to.

The term ‘mama’ is all that remains of the original expression ‘Let’s go make somebody a mama’, which was later shortened to ‘Let’s go make a mama’. Other fraternities have different ways of saying it, but the meaning remains the same – a girl who’s always available [as sexual entertainment].

An old lady ... [can] find herself reclassified as a mama, which means she is common property.

(ibid, pp. 176-177)

Objectives of this Research.

Whether ‘old ladies’ and ‘mamas’, or ‘scrubbers’ and ‘blocks’, this image of gang-related women remains despite notable works on the “female crook” (for example, Adler, 1975, p.42)

and on women's involvement in gangs (Campbell, 1984; Miller 1998b, Moore, 1991). Data gained from inquiry that has not explored issues arising out of the traditional gender-based assumptions are limited, in that they provide little to broaden our understanding of the girls/women in gangs or their experience. And while useful international data on women in gangs have begun to accumulate, in New Zealand fundamental questions about gang-related women remain unanswered, for example:

- What motivates women towards the gangs?
- How does the gang structure impact on women?
- How are women socialised to accept their position within the gang?
- How do women interpret their role within the gang?
- How do gang-associated women make sense of their world?

These questions provide the base from which I attempt to generate a wider understanding of women's reality and experience within New Zealand's gangs. This study is distinctive in that I have had some personal involvement with a gang, which has facilitated access to a wealth of information from gang-related women. The study follows the journeys of ten women into and out of the gang context, as they related their stories to me, which has allowed aspects of the interaction processes involved to be explored.

I have presented a brief overview of each woman's life, constructed from in-depth, semi formal conversational interviews, to both introduce the gang-related women interviewed and to establish their credibility to speak on aspects of the gang culture. Following this, an analysis of the women's stories draws attention to personal and family factors that lead to, or support gang involvement, and outlines the gang socialisation processes that occurred when the women were first involved in the gang scene. Further to this, the role of women in the gangs is explored and an attempt has been made to illustrate how gang-related women make sense of their role. In doing so, I have outlined the 'rules of the game' and the tactics that the men employ to gain and maintain power and control over women within New Zealand gangs.

Where possible, I have endeavoured to use the women's own words to illustrate their reality and experience in the gang culture. And I share and discuss their thoughts, reactions and feelings about general gang violence, domestic/family violence within the gang context, and

gang rape. I have also shared the gang-related women's strategies for survival and in the process, the contradictory position women hold in gangs becomes all too clear.

As all the women interviewed have left gang life behind, I reflect on the women's decisions to leave a gang-related partner or the gang scene. The circumstances that prompted this decision and the restraints or blocks to leaving are discussed, which contributes to an understanding of why women feel trapped within the gang scene and stay in violent and abusive relationships or in violence prone contexts. The actual process of leaving is difficult, but as the women have interviewed demonstrated, it can and has been done. I discuss the process of leaving that these women outlined, and briefly examine difficulties encountered. The significance of religious conversion and problems associated with individual counselling are also considered.

Life for the women interviewed, after gang involvement has been reduced to a minimum or completely ended, and their hopes and future aspirations are outlined briefly both in the women's own stories and towards the end of the thesis. Like the women I interviewed, I know that the sharing of these stories and my analysis will invoke a wider understanding of the New Zealand gang culture and its impact on women. We, the women interviewed and I, hope that the flow-on effects of the current research will benefit not only social service workers in their understanding of gang life, but also other gang-related women who may be struggling in their attempts to make sense of their lives. We also hope that gang members will rise to a challenge and take a real hard look at their own lives and at the impact of their violence and abuse.

CHAPTER TWO: THE RESEARCH METHOD.

Introduction.

As data about New Zealand's gang culture are limited, and have been drawn primarily from secondary sources, the current study has been based on a range of life stories collected from women who have had involvement in the gang scene. To begin, I was armed with personal knowledge¹ and several years training and experience in social services with a focus on violence prevention. This initial grounding had been supplemented through academic studies that have facilitated background understanding of many theoretical explanations of deviance, violence in general, male violence towards females, and collective behaviour. In acknowledging that the best way of exploring the gang culture is to approach those involved (see Campbell, 1984, pp.1-3; Decker & Van Winkle, 1996, p.27; Miller, 1975 in Hagedorn, 1990, p.247; Spergel, 1995, p.15), I went straight to the women for their stories before reviewing literature on women and gang involvement.

This approach was taken for a number of reasons. First, I wanted to generate an understanding of the gang-related women's reality and experience in a way that validates the women's realities and makes their experience visible enough to expose the power relations involved. Second, I had been influenced by two authors, Kathleen Blee in, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (1991) and Michael Schmidt in, *The New Reich: Penetrating the Secrets of Today's Neo-Nazi Networks* (1993). The discussions contained in these books showed me that there is wealth of knowledge carried by those immersed in, or who have previously belonged to, various sub-cultures that can sometimes be ignored or by-passed by academics. Third, I strongly believe sociologists should be 'out there' amongst the people getting their hands dirty, drawing on their own and others' everyday reality and experience, working with and within the areas that they study, to promote understanding and change.

In doing so, I have drawn on C. Wright Mills' (Mills, 1970, pp.1-29; Mills, 1963, pp.395-402; Roseneil, 1993, p.188) comments on private troubles and public issues, and feminist discussions related to the well-known slogan - "the personal is the political" (cited in Dann, 1988, p.28) to validate my stand. And I explored women's reality of gang life in a way that

¹ For summary of my experience, see Appendix I.

not only taps into their knowledge and wisdom but also empowers the women concerned to make sense of the complexities in their lives. This enables them to promote the need for change, and to initiate and work for change in ways that account for their own particular needs, and will promote others' understanding of women's involvement in our gangs (see Kelly, Burton & Regan, 1994, p.28; Munford, 1992, pp.84-85; Oakley, 1981, pp.31-59; Personal Narratives Group, 1989, pp.4-5; Stanley and Wise, 1983, pp.176-178; Smith, 1987, pp.91-96).

Following this, I drew up an overview of the history and development of gangs in New Zealand (see Appendix II). This background research was largely literature-based and has been extracted from a wide variety of sources such as, newspapers, magazines, government inquiries and so forth. This work provides the contextual background for the current research and was carried out while I negotiated access to gang-related women.

Gaining Access.

Access to the gang-related women, who had at least one year's previous involvement with a gang as a partner of a gang member or a long-standing, active associate, was secured through a number of strategies. To maintain clear boundaries, I decided not to interview women with whom I had previous gang-related connections. Some women were contacted through informal approaches to social workers known to me, who then talked about my study with gang-related women that they had previously encountered. These social workers were able to discuss my research interest and answer general queries about me. Four women interested in participating provided phone numbers and suitable times so I could make contact. Some other women were contacted through a coordinator of a drug and alcohol rehabilitation programme. The coordinator, a former male gang member, was able to provide the contact details of a former gang-related woman who wanted to find better ways to support women from gangs. After an initial discussion about my aims, objectives and background, this woman conveyed my research interest to several other gang-related women, three of whom wanted to participate in the research and provided contact details. Three more women were contacted through word of mouth and either I approached the women directly or other people who had contact with gangs approached them on my behalf.

Initially, over seventeen contacts were made. Those women with whom I spoke directly were more willing to participate in the study once they knew my background and were able to

ascertain my creditability. Those with whom I had made no initial contact were more reluctant and wanted 'to check me out'. When the intermediate person was trusted, then their information about my background was usually enough to facilitate the contact process. In five cases no information was relayed about my background, mainly because the person making the approach was not known me, and these approaches failed. In all, twelve women, aged between 29 and 46 years, agreed to participate in this study. The time they had spent with the gangs ranged from two years to around thirty-five years. Two of the women were unable to complete the interviews due to unexpected circumstances, a death in the family and a motor vehicle accident. Several other women were willing to talk about their contact with gangs but were restrained from formally participating for a number of reasons. In many cases, there was a fear that the gang or gang member partner would find out.

Upon phone contact, all women were given a verbal outline of my research and detailed information about my connections with a particular gang. This eased the initial discussions and suspicion. There was a high level of cautiousness from most involved, some insinuated that I might have been an undercover cop or a newspaper reporter. When suspicion arose, I asked the women concerned to close their eyes and to think back to the first time that they had ever entered the pad or gang headquarters. Then I asked them to think about where all the eyes were. After an initial quiet period, I told the woman about my feelings and the response that I got the first time I entered a gang property. In most cases the responses to this role-play centred on my having described thoughts and feelings that were very similar to those that the women had experienced. Then there was often laughter as we further discussed our similar experiences. I established further confidence in the women by openly acknowledging their possible concerns and initiating discussion on how these concerns could be minimised and managed. Also I advised the women that I was happy for them to have support during the times we met and subsequently some did this.

After a brief discussion about relevant safety concerns, arrangement was made for me to meet with the participants in a mutually agreeable venue for further discussion and/or the interviews. In most cases, the women chose the location for the interviews. One woman wanted to meet in a library for further discussion because she wanted to 'check me out' for herself. This woman explained her concerns and thought that I could have been an associate of her former partners. Once the woman had been assured that I was not 'working for' the gang or her estranged ex-partner she felt more relaxed. And after that first meeting, I was

welcome in her house. On another occasion, I met the woman concerned at a fast food outlet where we chatted for a while then went to a private dwelling for the formal interview and further discussion. All other interviews we held in the women's own homes.

Upon meeting, all the women were given written information about the research project and my contact details (Appendix III). They were given an interview guide (Appendix IV) and were asked to sign a participant consent form (Appendix V). All women were told of their right to withdraw from the research at any point up to completion of the final draft of the thesis. We then engaged in brief discussion about gang activity before the formal interviews started.

Interviews

All interviews were carried out on semi-structured, conversational bases; meaning that while the interview had a focus, standardised questions were not asked, and there was flexibility in terms of topics and themes being discussed. Thus the interviews were more like guided conversations, with both the interviewer and interviewees contributing to the discussions that took place. This form of interview was useful when attempting generate a more relaxed environment as the participants could gain some control over the interview process. Prior knowledge of the gang scene meant that I understood the sensitive nature of the type of information that was likely to be disclosed, especially with regards to violence and criminal activity. Thus I was able to prepare for the interviews.

The literature on domestic violence indicates that some interview procedures can foster further violence or abuse from the perpetrators of violence or generate emotional distress for the victims. The semi or unstructured interviews are said to be the most useful in that they allow for greater flexibility and emotional safety during the data collection process. The participants can have some control in determining how much, and what sort of information they provide. To further facilitate comfort, I encouraged the women to share what they considered important as opposed to what I wanted to hear. The conversational interview allows the interviewer to share her/his thoughts, feelings and related experiences during the interview, and this tends to facilitate a sense of trust, comfort and a deep understanding. This form of interview also enables reflection on the content and the expansion of ideas around particular areas of interest in a more natural, free-flowing way than the more interrogative style interview procedures do. And by drawing on the semi-structured, conversational

approach, I was free to check out the comfort levels of the participants during the course of the interviews (see Fine, 1993, pp. 278-287; Gelles, 1979, pp.164-168; Glover, 1995, pp. 139-140; Hoff, 1991, pp.8-15; Kvale, 1996, p.19; Leibrich, Paulin & Ransom, 1995, p.156-157; Stets, 1988, pp. 15-18). Having basic counselling skills, I was in a position to monitor the women's comfort levels and where needed, I was able to ask if the women wished to continue.

Although participants were given an interview guide that outlined the areas that I was interested in (Appendix IV), often this was put to the side as the discussions that took place tended to flow along similar threads anyway. It was a mutual agreement by all that the focus was *not* on gang-related crime, and this aspect of activity was not explored due to the potential risks involved. Furthermore, any information, which I believed was too risky to reveal, or that the women have shared with me in strict personal confidence, remains solely mine and have not been discussed in this research.

The interview sessions were emotionally laden and we shared both laughter and tears as we relayed our thoughts and feelings throughout the interviews. Some interviews were more emotionally draining than others were and when the interviews were over, I asked for feedback about the process. Overall, the interviews were carried out with little or no problems. All the women were eager to share their stories and were happy that this sort of research was being carried out. And they indicated that they were happy with what they had shared and with the process that took place. In most cases we could have spent several more hours discussing our experiences. Where deep personal emotions were shared, I checked to ensure that the women were emotionally safe or had support when I left. And I reminded them of my contact details so they could contact me if they wished.

After three of the interviews, I sought the aid of my friend and colleague, Neil McPherson, a clinical psychologist who helped me process feelings that were triggered for me during and after the interviews. This process helped me keep clear boundaries between my own emotional processes and the women's. and this enabled me to move into the analysis phase of the research easily.

Establishing truth, was not considered necessary throughout these interviews after all, I was interested in the women's realities and their experience as *they presented them* to me. Plus I

acknowledge that our perceptions of events and circumstances can change over time and when we look back on our lives from a different position. However, I did have an awareness of gang culture and this meant that the stories the women told were not at all unfamiliar. When the women had support people present, the support person would, in most cases, elaborate on certain themes or incidents being reported during the interviews. Some of these support people even reminded the person being interviewed about certain aspects of gang life. Furthermore, during some of the interviews the women had various forms of documentation that supported some of what they had reported. On a similar level, the supplementary semi-formal interviews and discussions worked to support and expand on the information the women interviewed discussed.

The interview guide (Appendix IV), that I gave the gang-related women, was used in the interviews police, gang associate and refuge workers. This ensured that similar themes were covered during these interviews. Most of the information gained from these different viewpoints worked to reinforce what the gang-related women had said. These interviews were useful for reliability and validity purposes and access to these people, was gained by word of mouth and personal contact.

Semi-formal Discussions

The semi-formal discussions were held with other partners of gang members, who wanted me to know about their views on certain aspects of gang life, present and former gang members, probation officers and social workers. These discussions were semi-formal in that they were carried out on a loose and informal bases. The participants were given an outline of the purpose, focus and agenda of the research and knew that their communication with me helped during the research process, particularly with the analysis. The discussions did not follow a structured format and participants disclosed and shared what they thought would aid my understanding of gangs and gang cultures. These discussions were useful in that these people provided me with an avenue to help conceptualise the issues and themes revealed during the interviews. And because of the congruency between the comments made by these people and those from the gang-related women, these interviews further verified and validated the women's views and stories (Fielding, 1993, p.164-165).

All those spoken to were told that I was carrying out this research. They knew that their views and discussion points were aiding me in my overall understanding of New Zealand gangs and

the dynamics involved. Their challenges and points of view aided my own understanding of the gang culture and where consent has been granted I have incorporated their views to further substantiate my findings.

Literature review.

As the themes began to emerge during the data collection phase of this research, I gathered literature from a wide range of sources. I took a multi-disciplinary approach when gathering this information and have drawn significantly from sociological, criminological, psychological and social work perspectives that attempt to explain criminal subcultures, gang involvement and gang dynamics, domestic/family violence, violence in general and religious conversions. I also explored sociological and social psychological perspectives that focused on group socialisation and group dynamics. The literature, where relevant, was used as a means to explore, tease out and explain what was happening to women in New Zealand gangs.

I have used a model of group socialisation, explained later, to help map the women's journeys into the gang scene, to explore the dynamics within the scene and their departure from that way of life. Similarly, I have drawn on domestic/family violence data in an attempt to aid an understanding of the power and control tactics, also expanded on later, that impact on women's lives within the gang scene and to explain why women stay or feel trapped within the gang culture.

Ethical Considerations.

Ethical approval for this research was sought from the Human Ethics Committee of the University of Canterbury. Having satisfied their criteria, ethical approval was granted by the committee on 27 February 1998. Although I followed the committee's guidelines care was taken in the following areas.

Informed Consent.

All participants, gang-related women or not, were given information about the nature of this research and their role in it. I advised the participants that I was willing to answer any queries that they may have had about the research. They were advised that they could withdraw their involvement at anytime prior to the completion of this thesis, and that the information provided would be return upon request. The names of my supervisors and university contact

information were provided so any additional queries could be clarified and laid to rest. All participants were asked if they were agreeable to tape recorders being used during the interviews and were given information on how the data would be used in this thesis. Participants were also asked to consent to have reports or a book based on the information they provided published at a later date.

Having taken into account the relevant safety concerns, three women had the opportunity to read and comment on the way I presented their life profiles and experiences. Overall, these women were pleased with the way I had written about their lives and two women stated that I had presented a true account of what they had revealed during the interviews. Where changes were made, these were minimal. In one case, the changes I made to prevent the informant being identified were reverted back to the original at the participant's request. This request was based on a spiritual perspective and the woman felt the risk was minimal.

While I have been, and still am, accountable to some of the women interviewed, not all women wished further involvement over and above sharing their stories. At the end of the day, I was entrusted *to do my best and to present an honest account* of the women's realities and experience. But it must be noted that it is still my interpretation of their information. And I take full responsibility for the way the data have been presented, and for the subsequent analysis of their stories.

Confidentiality and the Right to Privacy.

All gang-related women and the male gang associate interviewed were assured of their right of privacy and confidentiality. They were given details about how their personal details would be protected. Pseudonyms have been used throughout this research to maintain the interviewees' right to privacy and confidentiality. Originally, I proposed using self-chosen pseudonyms, but knowing that gang members, who generally adopt nicknames or aliases, have an uncanny ability to match nicknames with the said person, I refrained from doing this. Instead, I asked the women to choose a name of a flower for their reported names, hoping that this would conjure up a degree of uniformity to the pseudonyms used, which would remove any hint of personal resemblance.

In addition to this, explicit descriptions of persons and gang-related incidents have been avoided to prevent the identification of the interviewee, of other persons involved, and of the

particular gang that the person or the incident was linked with. In places slight alterations have been made but these do not take away or shift the understandings gained to any significant degree. As my experience has shown me that gang members have a good knowledge of 'who's who' in gang circles, the names of the towns or cities have been avoided and no direct relationships to particular gangs have been identified to help deflect attention away from those interviewed.

During the research process, the data collected was stored in locked files until all direct reference to interviewees, people's names, the names of gangs and reference to place names were removed. The interview tapes were destroyed or returned immediately after their transcription. And all real names and the participant contact information have now been deleted from my files.

Cultural Sensitivity.

While the primary relationship that connected me with the women interviewed was based on an ex to ex gang woman level, consideration had to be given to the secondary levels of the relationship. And as I was interviewing a number of women from different ethnic backgrounds to my own, namely women of Maori and Pacific Island descent, I sought the assistance and support of a cultural adviser to help reduce the pitfalls that may have arisen during cross-cultural interaction. For the purposes of this research, I negotiated support from a Hazel Phillips of Ngati Mutunga, a mentor who has a proficient understanding of the research process. Her encouragement and challenges helped ensure the research approach was appropriate and carried out in a respectful manner.

Additional understandings in relation to cultural sensitivity have been informed by Russell Bishop's book, *Collaborative Research Stories: Whakawhanaungatanga* (1996), by Ngahuia Te Awakotuku's discussion paper titled *He Tikanga Whakaaro: Research Ethics in the Maori Community* (1991) and by Kathie Irwin's article titled *Maori Research Methods and Processes: An Exploration* (1994). These readings support Kaupapa Maori research processes, which are "epistemologically based within Maori specificities, preferences and practices" (Bishop, 1996, p.15.). They challenge the power imbalances that exist between the researcher and the researched in terms of their agenda, methods of data collection and analysis in relation to the dominant Pakeha world-view. In doing so, Kaupapa Maori research calls for a collective orientation to the research endeavour, which benefits all participants. The

challenge to non-Maori like myself is not to turn away from Maori research, but to ensure that their work is “dedicated to the betterment of Maori people” (ibid, p.18.) as opposed to contributing towards the marginalisation and disempowerment of Maori people, their aspirations and their commitments.

As I live in a bi-cultural family, these aspects of the research process were particularly important to me. And throughout this research I have kept these challenges in mind and have adopted strategies that encourage an equal relationship between the women interviewed and myself. My introductions included a lot of sharing about myself, my background, and my connections to gangs and to Maori. I sought advice from the women interviewed about the research agenda, its purpose and outcomes. More than anything else, the women interviewed have seen this research as an opportunity to help other young women who are contemplating gang involvement or who may be struggling in their attempts to make sense of what is happening around them and to them in the gang scene. They also wanted to convey a message to those women who feel trapped within the gang scene that, although difficult, they can make some changes in their lives. The sharing of their stories, the participants hope, will foster a sense of hope.

Overall Analysis.

In the first instance, I decided to write up brief profiles of the women’s lives. This was useful because it allowed me to become more familiar with the content of the interviews. I also think that they provide an overall insight into the lives of the women interviewed, which gives the reader a base from which the subsequent analysis can be understood. Having constructed the profiles, a thematic analysis was been carried out, which followed the women’s natural line of progression through the gang scene. This was mapped as close as possible to the way the women presented their journeys to me. These themes were then explored and largely supported by data available in the literature on gangs, and in the domestic violence area.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE WOMEN'S ACCOUNTS: GETTING INTO AND OUT OF THE GANG.

Introduction.

In this section I introduce the ten gang-related women interviewed, and provide a brief overview of their lives and experience with gangs in New Zealand. These mini profiles closely follow the interview transcripts and map out the women's lives as they presented them to me. They provide a glimpse into the women's personal lives and facilitate an understanding of each individual woman, and the particular circumstances that worked to shape their lives. The profiles help to establish the women's creditability and right to speak out on the gang-related issues that are covered in the subsequent analysis. In many ways, these profiles on their own reveal sociological insights as the similarities and differences between the women become noticeable.

Thistle.

[Thistle's close friend and confidante, Briar, supported her during the interview, and while the focus of this profile remains on Thistle, Briar's comments, where relevant, have been included with the consent of both women.]

Thistle was born in 1969 and both her parents are of European descent. As a child growing up in New Zealand she thought her working class family was relatively normal in that her parents were married, they both went out to work, she had a younger brother and nothing appeared to be out of the norm. On rare occasions, Thistle saw her mother being hit by her father, but said that this fitted in with the typical scenario of the father coming home drunk and being abusive. As a child, Thistle did not like this, and now acknowledges that she does not know whether her father's drunken behaviours influenced her life to any major degree. In general, her early childhood years were times of happiness and she had little to worry about. At the age of fourteen, however, life for Thistle took a dramatic turn.

As an adolescent, Thistle began to realise that her grandfather's affections toward her as a child had in fact been sexual molestation and although this had stopped, coming to terms with the abuse combined with understanding herself as a young teenager was a difficult emotional

process. In addition to this, Thistle learned that the father she had always known was not her biological father. She was confused, felt betrayed and somewhat isolated as the image of her 'normal family' disintegrated around her. Struggling with the emotional trauma, Thistle ran away from home and left a note for her parents stating that she would return in two days time. But during her time away she consumed a large quantity of alcohol, became inebriated and went through a state of overdose. On recovery she did not return home. Thistle realised that her neck was covered in love bites and she knew her parents would be upset. "I'd um, ...had hickeys, there wasn't a white space on my neck," she said. "That's why I didn't go home.... My poor parents!"

Several days later, the police, having been contacted by her parents, found Thistle and returned her home to her family. As a consequence, Thistle was grounded and some clear and tight boundaries were established to restrict her social movements. Thistle objected to the curfews and the control that her parents tried to maintain and began to rebel. She would want to go out on a Friday night and her curfew would be firmly set for ten o'clock that night. When this happened she would not return until late the following Sunday afternoon. "I was going to be grounded anyway," she said. Thistle had many friends and acquaintances, and she enjoyed socialising with them. At the time it was really hard and indeed shameful having to face going home early. To arrive home by ten o'clock, she would have had to leave her friends and the town centre by half past nine to ensure that she caught the early bus. As a teenager, Thistle felt that was just too early for any teenager to be expected to arrive home. Now, Thistle acknowledges that her parents were put under considerable stress because of her behaviour, and in her defence, she indicated that she managed to stay clear of any serious trouble and avoided conflict with the law.

Thistle still knew that her parents loved her and she remained living with them and did well at school. She passed all her School Certificate papers before she left school and then moved away from the family home to do a variety of jobs over the next few years. By the time Thistle was twenty years of age she was working in an inner city massage parlour and it was around this time when she met the man who was to become her long-term partner and the father of her two children.

In the beginning, Thistle saw the relationship as a short-term arrangement and a bit of fun. "...I wanted to go overseas," she said, "so... he was my toy boy. That's what I always used to

tell him anyway.” In time, however, Thistle found herself pregnant and after the baby was born her partner began to pressure her to get married. Thistle agreed to become engaged, just to get him off her back, as she knew that she would never marry him. “I’d already had a smack in the head by that stage,” she said indicating that her partner had a propensity towards violence. About two years into their relationship, when their baby was about eighteen months old, Thistle and her partner separated for a while. During this time he went to stay with a couple of male friends who were sharing a flat, one of them being a patched member of a well-known motorcycle gang, the other was an associate.

Prior to this her partner was not heavily involved in the gang scene and like many other people they associated with he occasionally went to parties at the gang headquarters. This particular motorcycle gang was generally known amongst their circle of friends as a good place for parties. Thistle’s friend, Briar, said, “You could go there all hours of the night to party-up [and] they often had the coolest bands.” This gang was known for supplying cheap drugs at that time and this brought many outsiders into the gang scene. Thistle and her friends generally stayed out on the periphery of the gang activity and treated the gang scene as merely a place to socialise and have fun.

Thistle’s partner, however, having become a flatmate with a gang member, got drawn deeper and deeper into gang activity and he soon became a prospect. The gang provided him with a sense of security, something that he was surer of than with his relationship with Thistle. She believed that he knew that she would not be his partner forever. Once he had proved his allegiance and gained his patch, the gang became like his family. There was always a place for him to go and the other gang members would stand by him whenever he needed them. And he soon developed a strong sense of belonging to the gang.

Over the next five years or so, Thistle and her partner had an on-off type relationship. Whenever they argued her partner would threaten to leave and sometimes he would go to the gang’s clubrooms and stay there for hours, or sometimes days. On some occasions he would move out of Thistle’s house to live with friends for a while and on other occasions, he would resort to violence. As she related:

I’d get hidings when he’d fucked up... like I didn’t look half as bad as a lot of other people [women], you know. But, yeah, he knocked me around a wee bit. He was

good. I mean, he didn't leave bruises, like he'd go for places that didn't bruise or didn't seem to.

In addition to the violence, Thistle's partner had casual sexual relationships with other women. She said that most gang members "had their main dirty girl, and other women" available on the side. This was just part of the gang scene. She described her partner as being "a real slut" and felt that she knew that he was mucking around on her at the time. His main 'dirty girl' also provided him with a place to go when they argued. To cope with her partner's infidelities, Thistle would close off her thoughts and feelings, and she became more aware that she was doing this when the gang members went out of town together on their bike runs. "You know there's the dirty girls," she said, "or different women in other places. It's just the way things are. You know what's going on."

Nearly six years into their relationship, Thistle decided to end it permanently. Her partner was very resistant to the idea and would not allow Thistle the freedom to leave. She waited and when the first opportunity arose to leave safely, she did. She had been in hospital giving birth to their second child when the gang had organised an out of town bike run, which her partner went on. When the baby was only two days old, she quickly discharged herself from the hospital, went home, packed up all her belongings and moved to another house before he arrived back. "It's the only way I could leave him," she explained.

The decision to end the relationship came about when Thistle realised that her partner's gang activities were putting her life and that of her children, at risk of harm through being caught up in inter-gang conflict. Her partner's gang had been at war with a rival gang, which had its members watching her house. Through her own contacts, Thistle found out that these rival gang members had been taking photos of people entering and leaving her house. They had confronted a male friend, who had picked up Thistle's child from her partner, about his association with her partner's gang. Thistle found the harassment of her friends unacceptable, as they had no gang connections except through her.

On acknowledging that her partner's gang life was beginning to filter deeper and deeper into her own life, Thistle found the risks were simply too great for her to ignore. She said:

I thought, 'Fuck that!' It was not, ... none of my business, you know. I mean, I had nothing to do with their [partner's gang] shootings or what ever, anything like that. But [partner's name] was Sergeant at Arms, or what ever you call it, at that time and I walked into the garage and there would be gun bits on the ground, and shavings, you know, sawn-off shotguns or whatever. And, then I knew that there were guns in my house and I ...[silence]. It used to make me spew, really, 'cause it was my house. What if the cops came? And, he knew ...[silence]; he put me in that danger.

In her resolve to leave her partner, Thistle accepted the support of family and friends, some of whom had been trying to persuade Thistle to leave the relationship for a considerable time. This support was valuable, as her partner would not have tried to intimidate her parents or to go to their home. And her close friends would not tell her partner where she was or assist him in his attempts to get her back. Thistle had some people within the gang scene who understood her position and assisted her. In particular, some of the other women told Thistle's partner that he did not need Thistle and this encouraged him to leave her alone.

While Thistle acknowledged the support she got from others she can reflect back on her own emotional processes that kept her in the relationship with her partner for the five plus years. Her self-esteem was low and at times she felt vulnerable. She was still working in the parlours at the time and had managed to retain a group of friends that her partner had no knowledge of. This meant that she did not need her partner in a material sense and that she had maintained a degree of emotional independence. However, her partner's intimidation and emotional abuse had gradually worn her down, enough to make the decision to leave her partner a really difficult one to make.

The independence that she retained in the relationship helped her manage the initial separation. She was aware that she still had some loving feeling for her partner and she struggled over this. Then there were the children to think about. Thistle worried about the impact separation would have on her children. She really wanted her children to be brought up with both a mother and a father present. And, every now and then her partner would announce that he was about to give the bikes and the gang up. These references to leaving the gang would inspire hope, hope that he was going to change, or hope that their relationship would improve. "It's all bullshit," she said, "but you like to believe what they say for a while!" In the end, it was the never-ending support of her friends and family that helped her work her way through a minefield of contradictory thoughts and feelings that emerged at this

time. They helped reassure her that the decision to leave the relationship was the right one when her own lowly self esteem would introduce doubt, confusion and cloud her reality.

In hindsight, Thistle believes that most of the women who are, or who feel stuck within the gang scene have very low self-esteems. She said that men like her partner “admire the strong woman, but prefer submissive women” in their close relationships. It does not take much pushing from men in gangs, before submissive women or those with low self-esteems feel isolated and begin to internalise the men’s perceptions of themselves and the world around them. Both Thistle and Briar feel the men’s perceptions become even more entrenched in women when they are born into, or grow up within the gang scene.

Some women, Thistle and Briar suggested, find it even more difficult to leave the gang scene behind and they reflected back on the deaths of a young woman in her twenties and her pre-school children, who were killed instantly in a car accident to convey this point. The woman’s parents were heavily involved with Thistle’s partner’s gang and she essentially grew up in and around the gang scene all her life. The main goals in this woman’s life were “to have a [name of gang] member for her man, to have his kid, and a bike. *That was her life!*” Thistle and Briar explained that this woman was stuck in an extremely violent relationship. They often saw the aftermath of her partner’s assaults, the worst time being when this woman’s partner had steel-capped her, or had kicked her in the head and body while wearing steel-capped boots. This woman had tried to conceal the worst of the bruises and cuts with a thick layer of make-up; even so, the bruises were clearly visible for days. Thistle and Briar, looked at their own children, and together concluded that the accident that killed this young woman and her children was a blessing. Thistle expanded:

Realistically, it’s the best thing that could have ever, ever happened to her, as awful as that may sound. The only way she was ever going to get away was ...[silence]... death, I suppose. She’d have never gotten away otherwise. Unfortunately, [children’s name] went with her.

This woman knew no other way of life, she had no support network outside the gang scene and even though she had tried on occasion to leave, this was not possible. Her partner would always find her and force her back.

Thistle and Briar attended their friend's funeral and they say that, for a while, their friend's death had a huge impact on the gang members and their partners, and prompted them to think about their way of life, the violence and the crime. They all knew this woman's death could have just as easily been at the end of a steel-capped boot. But six months or so later this had all been conveniently forgotten and life just went on. Thistle, however, was reminded of the reality of gang life and feels that her decision to leave her partner was the right one for herself and her children, and Briar tends to agree.

Thistle's final words, while still holding the men responsible for the way they treat their women, encourage women to take responsibility for their own lives and the choices that they make. And in sharing her own hard learning's she said:

Be yourself. Don't change for anyone. It's a choice thing. Women have choices right from the word go... If you allow too many hidings in the beginning, then it becomes a part of life. If he hits you for the first time, he needs to be history from that point on. Keep your independence and be able to support yourself. Don't give up your job or your life. You are your own person, not his. Open your eyes and know what you are getting into, and you know, have some respect for yourself.... These men will take everything out of you, if they can, to maintain their own sense of superiority. People can only put you down if you let them. Don't let them take you down.

Freesia.

Freesia, a humble and unassuming woman, was born in 1969. Her youthful appearance, sparkling, green eyes and subtle smile, combined with a strong commitment to secure a fulfilling and happy life, contrast sharply with the burdened existence that she is trying to leave behind. She was born into a working-class family that struggled with the complexities that emerge when people from two distinct cultural backgrounds come together to form a family unit. Having grown up in this bi-cultural environment, Freesia described herself as a "Maori Pakeha" but acknowledged that she has a deeper affinity and spiritual connection with the Maori side of her family than to her European counterparts.

Her parents had a troubled relationship, which culminated in violence and abuse, and to some degree, this stifled Freesia's childhood years. With tears welling in her eyes she described how her father "smacked [her] mother around." On some occasions, frightened and alone, she would reach out for help and call the police. She remembered phoning the police during one

incident and when the police arrived, her parents denied the violence that had previously occurred. Her attempts to stop the violence and abuse in this way often reverted back on her and she would, after the angry retorts died down, creep away to her room and cry. Being brought up as an only child was not easy for Freesia and, as she had a half brother that lived with another family, she often wondered what his family life was like.

“I wasn’t a spoilt one and only child,” she said. *“It was strict. It was a strict upbringing!”* This meant that her parents smacked Freesia when she misbehaved or had upset them. Being averse to the physical discipline, she rebelled. “I became a rebellious child who went through everything from running away from school, running away from home and so on because of my parents’ relationship.” Eventually Freesia decided that she could not live with her parents and, with her rebellious streak, bolstered by her lack of trust in adults or any authority figures, she sought respite from her family tribulations with a group of similar like-minded kids. The local street kids soon became a source of understanding and provided Freesia with an escape from her home life. And on a number of occasions, Freesia ran away from home.

When Freesia was twelve she ran away, yet another time, to become a street kid herself. During this break from her family home her parents separated and this made the street life a more permanent reality for her. She said, “My mother went her way and my father went his way and I went my way, out on the streets, which I found a lot of fun.” While Freesia still had some contact with her parents, she found the freedom and adventure of being in charge of her own life exciting.

With her rebellious spirit being fed by other like-minded children, Freesia entered this new life with high energy. “I got pissed every night. Um, we had some real fun parties. I got tattooed here, there and everywhere!” she asserted while rearranging her clothes to display numerous blue ink, self-done tattoos over her arms and legs. Today the tattoos serve Freesia as a reminder of days gone by, of having to survive on her wits to secure food, clothes, or money wherever she could, however she could. She soon grew tired of this life and when the opportunity arose, she went back to live with her mother.

Living with mum was not easy, as both Freesia and her mother had found their own independence. It was difficult for them to get along with each other and when they decided that they could no longer live together, Freesia went to live with an auntie in a different city.

Moving to the city prompted a new release of energy and Freesia soon found some new interests. This time she started to hang out at the games rooms or pool halls and, at the age of fourteen, this was much more fun than attending school. Subsequently, she did not finish her fourth form year before she dropped out of school altogether. It was around this time that she met up with a chapter of a local gang.

Some members of Freesia's extended family had been associated with this particular gang. A cousin was a patched member while others were associates who used to hang around with gang members a lot of the time. At this stage, Freesia explained that she had no affiliation with the gang herself as she had just arrived in the city. When two members of her extended family invited her to a gang party she thought it would be a lot of fun and, since her family was going to be there, she felt she would be safe. This was not to be the case as what she did not realise was that her own cousin had set her up for 'the block' [gang rape]. Accordingly, that night six men raped her while her cousin disappeared from the scene.

Freesia, only fourteen at the time, still remembers feeling terribly betrayed. She said that she remains confused about how it actually happened as she had been drinking alcohol that day. Since then she has tried not to think about the rape and has tried to block it from her memory. At the time, she never disclosed the abuse to anyone and did not report the incident to the police. As years went by, however, she could no longer hold in all her feelings, she went back to live with her father and disclosed the rape to him. Opening up to her father was a difficult process as Freesia felt ashamed and thought that he did not really understand what had happened. Her father was a heavy social drinker and in some sense this presented Freesia with another barrier to actually dealing with the effects of the rape. She described how, rather than dealing with her consuming issues, she and her father would go boozing around the town and focus on having a good time.

The boozing up soon became tiresome and Freesia decided that it was time to leave her family behind and made a fresh start by herself. "I went out on my own," she said, before reflecting on all the 'ifs' in her life. "If my parents.... If I had a good role model.... If there was someone out there.... Maybe ... [silence], I wouldn't have been there." Freesia resolved, "I had to learn ... [silence], find out for myself. I learnt the hard way and believe me you suffer!"

At the age of seventeen, Freesia, out on her own and with no parental support, began to explore the city's nightlife and soon got deeply immersed in the pub scene. She started going to the pubs regularly, and acted like a twenty-year-old. And it was during a visit to the pub that she met up with another gang member from a completely different gang to the one that she had previously encountered. "This guy," she said, "...was still a 'puppy' himself" and, to some degree, still had a lot of learning to do and he learned about life the hard way, just like Freesia had. But they enjoyed each other's company.

At first Freesia relished the bikie scene, she enjoyed being on the back of a bike, the freedom, and the people. At that time, they were the 'in' thing, but the fun, the thrill and the excitement of the bikie life changed and gave way to a more sinister type of existence. Freesia went out to work while he stayed at home and sold the drugs. "*It was that sort of a BUZZ!*" she asserted. He became possessive and jealous, and attempted to control her every move. They would go to the pub and he would make sure that Freesia was not talking to anyone else except for a female. She said, "...and if I did, or, even if I didn't, we'd go home and I'd get the bash [a beating or hiding]. Even if you were doing right and he was totally off his face [intoxicated] ... you would still get the bash anyway." And the more he drank, the more he used drugs, the more violent and abusive he got.

One day, while at a gang function, Freesia saw another woman being gang raped and she was horrified. "I really felt like rat shit because I had been through that myself," she reflected. "And, there was nothing I could do, you know. I tried to help her and ...[silence] I got pulled away by my partner and then I was dragged away, got the bash, that sort of thing, you know. I ended up being put in hospital because I didn't like what I saw." This particular rape had a huge impact on Freesia. The emotional feelings that arose out of the gang rape that she endured, and had managed to push away, resurfaced and she knew that she needed to take stock of her life. Having thought through a number of options, more booze, some pills or drugs and even actions that were more sinister, like suicide, she decided that she had grown tired of the gang life and simply said, "I'm outta here. I am out of here," and she left the gang scene behind her. "I seen the light", she now celebrates, "I seen the light!"

While Freesia had grown tired of going to hospital for no reason at all, of being bashed for by her partner for nothing other than his own insecurities, she still held some loving feeling for him. Hoping to save the relationship, she tried to pull him away from the gang scene, but he

would not budge and some months later, he was confined to imprisonment. Freesia wrote to him while in prison, informing him that she had been pregnant and had his child. And while he acknowledged the child was his they never resumed their relationship. Freesia said, "I'm glad I made the break because life is better." But life has not been easy, especially when she sees some of the men who raped her and feels an intense amount of hate and anger build up inside her. She also grieved when her child's father died a few years later. Alcohol is no longer used as an escape from hurt and pain as Freesia talks through her problems with someone she can trust and has engaged the help of a counsellor who walks her through the toughest times.

Since Freesia has left the gang scene she has formed a new relationship. Her new partner has taken on her child as his own and they now have two more children. While she acknowledges some difficulties in her current relationship, she and her partner are working on their problems together. And, this time Freesia is very clear about what she will or will not accept from her partner, and abuse is something that she *"will not accept."*

Freesia now devotes her life to her three children and has set some positive goals for her own future. Although Freesia still feels vulnerable at times she is determined to take responsibility for her own life and happiness. And, she leaves the reader, gang woman or not, with her following message:

Wherever you are be strong to your self,
Follow your vibes,
Take note of that uncomfortable feeling and get out.
Find someone you trust to talk to and believe in your self.

Lily.

Lily, born in 1967, said that she came from a very broken family. Although she had five siblings, she was actually raised separately by her grandmother until her grandmother died when Lily was around five years old. Lily then went to live with her uncle and his wife, as they were childless. Lily explained that "...her mother was into her own thing; alcohol, going out and ... also working the ships." Therefore, Lily and her siblings were given out or were placed in the care of extended family members when they were young. During her stay with her uncle and auntie, Lily disclosed that another relative had sexually abused her. This was

something that she kept to herself and has only recently processed. By the time Lily was nine her uncle and his wife had separated, which resulted in another shift and Lily was sent back to her mother's care.

Her mother was still living the same sort of life and Lily said that as she and her sisters were a little older by then, it was convenient for her mother to have them, the girls, live with her. They were now old enough to cook and clean the house. Lily described her mother as being hard and extremely abusive, both physically and emotionally. As a result, Lily still carries a lot of bitterness towards her mother, as she felt unloved and uncared for. And, there was no sense of security or family connectedness during Lily's childhood years, particularly after her grandmother died.

The insecurity that Lily felt was amplified by the fact that Lily's conception occurred through one of her mother's liaisons and having a different father from her siblings became more obvious as Lily grew older. Lily, having a European father, said that her siblings, having two Maori parents, were darker than she was. Subsequently, because Lily was the fair one she was always called the 'Honky' of the family. There was also a lot of violence between Lily's mother and her adoptive father. "I would hear the fighting and the screaming," she reflected. "I'd run to my room and just bang myself up against...I'd block the door so nobody could get in and just sit there and cry. Yeah, *it was scary*," she said.

In some respects, Lily believes that this background influenced her during her adolescent years. She left school having completed only two months of her third form year at college and never returned. By the time she was fifteen, Lily had started to hang around with gangs. She was no stranger to gang life even then, as some extended family members had already joined up with one of New Zealand's well-known ethnic gangs. She started drinking and socialising within the gang scene well before she actually started to go out with a gang member. For Lily, it was a combination of the whanau [family] feeling and the excitement of it all that caught her attention.

Lily also reflected on how the lack of security she experienced as a child heavily influenced her choice of partner. By the time she was seventeen, Lily had entered a relationship with a gang member from another well-known ethnic gang, and as she said:

... it wasn't something I had planned. Um, it took me a while to figure that out, but I... Yeah, it was a security thing...because I never had that when I was young. So it

was security for me, you know, this tough fella who would look after me and um, love me, what I never had when I was young.

Lily became isolated from her own family when she formed this relationship because her partner was a member of a gang that was outside her family's gang connections. Her family disowned her for such treachery and she felt even more abandoned during times of need, as we shall later see. Lily's partner was in his early twenties when she met him in an urban city pub. He had been released from prison only two weeks earlier. Nevertheless, she enjoyed his company and felt accepted by him, his gang associates and their partners at that stage. But within the gang scene proper, Lily said that she soon learned that all was not as it first appeared.

Lily described how the process of becoming 'the Missus' of a gang member was not completely straightforward. Other gang members and their partners evaluated Lily's behaviour and motivations from their own particular criteria. Lily was watched and tested by both the women and the other men. The female partners of gang members were highly suspicious and cautious whenever a new woman arrived on the scene. Lily explained, "...as long as you don't go anywhere near their man, you were all right." In time the women accepted her, having made absolutely sure Lily was no threat to their own relationships and that Lily's partner had really found 'a Missus'. The other men, however, operated in a different manner.

Lily's partner was generally known as 'the Hitman' or 'a Kingpin', having built up a reputation through his ability to fight and his fearlessness when confronted with violence. *"Nobody within that chapter would have mucked around with him!"* Lily asserted. Other gang members held Lily's partner in awe. This cautious respect could more aptly be described as a rational fear, as there was always a certain unease around him. Other members watched what they said and did around him. When he was not around, however, things were different. As Lily said, "...they would try and um, pull me around the corner or try and 'chance it' [make sexual advances]. It was hard to tell him what was going on because a woman doesn't get in between the men." Through experience, Lily learned that she would be held responsible for other men's actions and she ended up getting beaten for what they did. In time, rather than tell her partner that one of his 'brothers' was trying it on, she kept quiet. Lily slowly began to learn the rules.

Within this gang women were seen as subservient to the men. Women were there for men's sexual gratification, to clean and cook, to mind children and to do as they were told. And, Lily expanded, "You just had to practically, keep you mouth shut. You see nothing, you say nothing, type thing." Women were not able to wear 'colours' or gang insignia; they could not attend club meetings or be seen to assert themselves, and they had no power within the gang. If women tried to be like one of the boys they would be treated like one of the boys. Lily had seen see gang members dragging these women out to the shed, and if they started to fight back they would be severely assaulted.

When reflecting on the violence that her partner used against her, and on having to witness other women being beaten and abused, Lily talked about how she soon learned to block out and hide her own feelings and sense of reality. She could not return to her own family at that time, so she felt as though she had to stay there and bear with it. Among other degrading scenarios, Lily reported on gang rape and illustrated her feelings of confusion, hurt, anger and powerlessness. She said:

Hmmm, rape is very, very degrading. The abuse is degrading. If I knew that there was a woman being set up for 'the block' [gang rape] the first thing that I wanted to do was to get him [her partner] away. I mean, he's got me. Why should he be in there with those guys? Um, but it's just, [silence] yeah, a lot of the time I was told to, 'Get home,' and I'd be really angry. By the time he'd get home... I'd nut off. Yeah, [silence] and end up getting a hiding. Yeah, but I had to let it out and after a while you don't trust any woman in there, in that room.... It was really degrading for women to be treated like that. And... you know, you know it [silence], you know it could be you next. Hmmm....

Eventually, Lily realised how damaging and degrading this violence and abuse was for both herself and the other women. She tried to leave her partner and the gang scene behind and went to a woman's refuge for help.

Having arrived at the refuge, Lily said that she was told that they would not take gang women in. Fearing an intrusion by gang members, they had to keep the other women already in refuge safe. Lily said that she felt vulnerable and alone, and that there was, and still is, little help available for gang women who want to leave abusive relationships. "They are basically on their own!" she said. Lily, at the time, had children to care for and she knew that the violence was effecting them too. With nowhere to go and with her children in tow, Lily sought help

from her own family who had previously rejected her. This time they helped Lily out and she went to stay with her mother.

In a short time, Lily's estranged partner managed to track her down. Other gang members had reported seeing her drinking with the gang that her family associated with and this was seen a double betrayal. Her partner organised a hit on this other gang's clubhouse. "He was hitting their pads, shooting their pads up. Just going crazy", she said. This made her feel terrible, she blamed herself for bringing the resultant trauma and stress on her family. One day her estranged partner physically assaulted her mother, an elderly woman who tried to stop him from beating Lily in the street. Fearing the worst, Lily returned to the relationship and nothing changed. Within a few months Lily left again, this time she went to Australia to get away from her partner. She stayed there for nearly two years before returning and resuming their relationship again.

While Lily was away, her partner grieved for the loss of his children and gradually pulled away from the gang. Slowly he began to realise the consequences of his abuse. When Lily and her partner finally reconnected, they went through a lot of counselling where he talked about his own family background and revealed that he had been sexually abused as a child himself. His own childhood was surrounded with intense violence and, with her own understanding of the impact of violence fostering a sense of compassion, Lily now believes that her partner's violence and anger emerged from a sense of powerlessness, which generated from his past. She says that he wants a better life for his children and that he has mellowed out a lot. Together, Lily and her partner are attempting to make a better life for themselves away from the gang scene.

Today, Lily reports that she, having spent around fifteen years in the gang scene, is contemplating her return to the education system. She hopes to embark on tertiary studies that will enable her to work with families and children that are in strife. Her partner now works with at risk youth, particularly those that have come from abusive backgrounds, and attempts to steer young men away from perpetuating the cycle of violence and abuse.

Daisy.

Daisy, born in 1970, was brought up in a reconstituted family. Her parents separated when she was young and her mother raised Daisy and her two sisters with the support of her mother's extended family. Daisy's father remarried and had two more daughters whom Daisy calls her half-sisters. Daisy's mother entered another relationship and the man; Daisy's stepfather was involved with her upbringing for about ten years. Although Daisy acknowledges that she is part Maori and prefers to be described as a New Zealand Maori, she did not share her ancestral heritage. Instead, she talked about how she was brought up around Europeans all her life and had never really experienced the Maori way of life such as, the whanau atmosphere and the sense of wairua [spirituality] that is central to being Maori.

Hers was a working-class family that lived in a predominantly, white populated urban suburb. Daisy's parents were rather strict and she had a controlled and sheltered life and as such, she was always interested in knowing what was on the other side of the fence or railings. Her parents were often unavailable, both physically and emotionally, as their alcohol use and gambling consumed much of their attention and time. Their addictions and the related problems had a huge impact on Daisy's life and she said that it is only now, after having done a great deal of personal counselling, that she is able to talk to her parents about feelings that have emerged from her childhood experiences.

In recognising the apparent contradictions between her parents' advice and their own actions, Daisy adopted a nonconformist attitude. She experimented with alcohol and drugs, and ran away from home a few times, which upset her parents a great deal. Her family, Daisy recalled, always called her the black sheep of the family, but she never associated with people who had been in trouble with the law. After Daisy left school, having completed half of the fifth form year, she went to work within the retail area. It was not long before she entered a brief relationship that resulted in the birth of a child, but the relationship eventually dissolved.

Around the age of nineteen, Daisy, coping as a single mother, went to stay with some friends. She soon learned that one of them was a patched gang member and, never having had contact with gang members before, her interest was aroused. As Daisy recalled:

It was my first experience of gangs um, without meeting up with the whole, sort of, gang thing. I think, what appealed to me was, that they were also rebels. They were really rebellious, they didn't conform, they were like a law unto themselves and um, that appealed to me.

She further said:

Being brought up with Europeans... then sort of coming into that um, whole sort of whanau atmosphere, I'd say, that appealed to me as well. There was a lot of wairua. He [the gang member friend] never sort of 'patched it' [acted the staunch gang member role] around the house, and was really a ...family man. He sort of took [us] under his wing... and we sort of, felt safe and secure with them.

Subsequently, Daisy got to know more gang members and their associates. During her stay with these people her hosts held a party, which was attended by members from various chapters of this well-known gang.

It was at this party that Daisy met her future gang member partner and having enjoyed herself, she spent that night with him. Within two weeks, they had moved into a relationship and for the first six years of the relationship her partner remained an active gang member. Being accepted into the gang scene proper, particularly within her partner's chapter, was not a smooth process. Daisy really found it difficult and thought that the gang members and their partners found it really difficult letting her in and accepting her as one of the boy's partners. She did not understand the rules, the laws, the culture and the everyday practices. Being Europeanised did not help. This gang was predominantly Maori based, and Daisy's manner, and her voice, and her way of dressing had a distinct edge that was generally frowned upon. [The term 'white wash', often used to label Maori persons who have adopted Pakeha traits, to some degree illustrates Daisy's situation here.] Daisy suggested that many members and their associates felt that she was stuck up.

In addition, Daisy wore dresses, make-up, and high heeled shoes. She was friendly and vivaciously sociable, which Daisy said, "...wasn't the buzz at all," in that scene. In hindsight, Daisy believes that she was probably being termed a real slut, in their eyes. And, this was just something that she had to contend with. Other women would confront Daisy about her dress and manner suspecting that she was a 'dirty-girl' [a female available for the men's entertainment purposes only - and seen as a threat by the gang member's partners]. The men

too, confronted Daisy and she soon learned to change her ways when they cut off much of her hair, sprayed beer all over her face or challenged her about the 'shit' or make-up on her face, in amongst other humiliating and degrading scenarios. Daisy also said that her partner's violence contributed to her changing her ways, real fast.

The first time Daisy was physically assaulted by her partner was in front of other people at the gang's headquarters. A club meeting had just finished and the President began to threaten and harass her. She told her partner that she was not taking any of this 'shit' or harassment and she stormed out making a big scene. This humiliated and embarrassed her partner who then retaliated and also assaulted Daisy. Daisy explained that she had shown a total lack of respect for him in front of others and that it was his duty to turn around and teach her a lesson in front of everybody to show that he had the upper hand.

This incident proved to be the first of many assaults for Daisy and eventually she began to accept violence as a way of life. As she said:

For me accepting violence, it was just an everyday buzz; it became a regular occurrence... I accepted that as a way of life for me being with a gang member, that um, ...it was something that you just put up with, something that you learnt to live with.... I'd get a hiding every time he got really drunk um, and then it got up to three or four days of a week where I'd have a black eye, or a blood nose, or was smacked around or something. And so, inside I felt, you know, it really hurt, but on the outside it was no different to what anybody else [any other gang woman] was going through.... You know, the bigger the hidings and the more people that knew about it, the more accepted, I thought, I might become with everyone else. I was sort of fitting in, you see.

Daisy reflected back and suggested that she soon became emotionally detached from herself. As a strategy, "...just to survive", she implored. Daisy denied her own feelings and sense of reality. In some respects, Daisy started to build thoughts and created beliefs that presented her life as getting better in spite of all the evidence which indicated that the situation was, in fact, getting worse. She talked about magnifying or illuminating any brief periods of kindness or the loving, caring person that she had glanced upon on occasion. In time all the emotions that she had blocked out returned and she turned her pain back on herself with drugs, alcohol and self-abuse, amongst other divergent activities.

Eventually, Daisy reached a point where her options seemed extremely limited. She said, "...at the end of the day I sort of thought, I'm either going to end up killing myself, my partner's going to end up killing me or I'm going to end up killing him.... *Yeah, it was just like hell!*" None of these options became an eventuality as Daisy began to acknowledge the gravity of her situation and she became desperate, but focused on leaving.

Having heard that women's refuges would assist women who were escaping from violent and abusive relationships, and that they provided lots of support and help, Daisy reached out to them for help. And so, in a mortified state, with her children in tow, she went to refuge. Much to her regret, this was not the safe haven that she had been led to believe it was. She explained that she waited for over an hour to be seen by the coordinator who then informed Daisy that she was not able to stay in the refuge. This was because she was affiliated with a gang. She was also told that she was basically, on her own because no other place would take her either.

Daisy, shattered and vulnerable, felt that she had no option but to return to her partner. In doing so, the violence continued. In time he was arrested, charged, convicted and sentenced to a term in prison for his violent offending. There he contemplated on his life and his future. Daisy was led to a place where she stayed with some Christians who helped her sort through her own issues. Having contemplated on his life, her partner ended up leaving the gang. After he was released from prison, while they still lived apart, Daisy and her partner both went through a period of Christian based counselling, both individually and in group therapy sessions. Two years later they both gave their hearts to Jesus, and it is through their faith and personal relationship with Jesus, Daisy reported, that they have both been set free from their past. There is now an inner strength that has enabled them both to move away from violence, abuse, alcohol and drugs. They, in their own ways, minister to others in times of need, be they gang members or otherwise, and give all praise to Jesus who, they believe, has led them through sets of experiences that aid His greater plan.

Daisy's final words are from a version of Jeremiah 29:11 and she cited:

For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

She gives praises back to Jesus, her Lord for all the experiences that she feels he has put her through, now interpreting them as avenues through which she has learned to be empathic, compassionate, and to be of help to others. And now she smiles as she sees a future that is full of hope.

Rose.

Rose, born in 1955, draws on a Scottish ancestral heritage. Her mother came to New Zealand when she was in her late teens before she met up with and married Rose's father. Rose comes from a traditional working-class family where her father went out doing manual work while her mother stayed at home as a housewife and a mother. Her life as a child was lonely and fraught with difficulty. And as we shall see, a large part of Rose's life has revolved around a central theme of violence.

Her father, was an alcoholic and when he drank her parents argued a lot. His propensity to resort to using extreme measures of violence also increased when he consumed large quantities of alcohol. Rose described how the whole family, being herself, her mother and her two siblings, lived in fear of her father's violent eruptions. When reflecting back on her childhood, Rose vividly remembers and can describe a number of separate incidents, which illustrate the degree of violence her father used.

One time he came home late at night, he was drunk and had found himself locked out. He got so angry that he threw the lawn mower through one of the children's bedroom windows. On another occasion, Rose's father smashed several windows in the house. Damage to property was only a part of the picture as Rose talked about how her father used to hit her mother often and on one occasion he pulled a loaded gun on her. Rose also described how he threatened other family members with a knife when Rose was away from the family home one time. Rose said that she felt that there was a degree of animosity from her siblings towards her as she was her father's favourite child and as such, he never physically abused her or threatened her with weapons like he did the others.

Rose believed her mother harboured similar feelings towards her. She felt that her mother picked on her because Rose reminded her mother of her father. As a child, Rose was very confused about her father. One minute she adored him and the next she was terrified and

worried about how he might respond when he arrived home. At times he demonstrated a caring and nurturing side. "He was a good father when he wasn't drunk," she clarified. "He'd help us with our homework and he'd take time to talk to us. He taught us that all people were equal, but then...[silence] he didn't treat my mother like an equal," she expanded with tears welling in her eyes as she acknowledged the contradictions. Eventually, when she was thirteen her mother and father separated, and when her father left the family home Rose felt devastated. "I found it hard," she said. It was like he just disappeared off the earth and Rose did not know where he was. And she never heard from him for five years.

When Rose was young she believed that her mother provoked her father's violence. "I used to think she should shut up, then he wouldn't, ... he wouldn't, ... you know, do anything," she said. But later, when Rose learned about alcoholism and experienced male violence herself, she became more understanding of her mother's position. Besides coping with violence within her family, Rose described other traumatic incidents that rocked her family's life.

When her brother was ten years old, doctors discovered that he had a brain tumour, which brought additional stress to Rose's family. Rose contracted meningitis and nearly died herself, when she was nearly fourteen. This was a really testing time for Rose as she tried to hide her family's problems from her friends at school. "I remember ... I was sick and two girls from school came to see me and I was terrified," she said. "I didn't want them to see me at home. You know, my father had left, but I felt ... that shame.... I didn't want them to see who I really was or how I was," she added. Rose spent a lot of time away from home as a child. If she were not at school she would often be down at the beach where she could close off emotionally and shut out her home life. Staying at the beach all day was adventurous; there she could relax and have some fun with her friends. School was also an escape from her home life and Rose went on to complete three years of secondary schooling before she ventured into factory work. It was around this transitional period that Rose met up with and began to socialise with the local bikies.

Rose, when aged around sixteen, met up with a young woman whose two brothers belonged to a particular Pakeha/European motorcycle gang. [To ensure anonymity these three people will be referred to as Leigh, Stuart and Tom respectively.] Rose became very close friends with Leigh and soon developed a teenage crush on Stuart. One evening Rose was invited to the gang's clubrooms with a woman friend of Leigh's and they were all sitting around

drinking and talking when one of the guys called for some action. Not realising what was happening at first, Rose saw some of the guys present strip themselves to from the waist down. Then, she said that Leigh's friend began to perform oral sex on one of the guys while the other men began to undress this woman. "She seemed to say that she liked it," Rose said. Rose soon realised some of the bikies were having turns, either orally as previously outlined or by having vaginal intercourse with this woman. When the bikies had gratified their lust, they decided to stick a beer bottle up the woman's vagina. Rose was mortified, she had never known people to behave that way. "I didn't know people carried on that way. I didn't!" Rose said. She described how she sat there watching these proceedings, somewhat stunned and too petrified to move.

As this action proceeded, Rose became more and more uncomfortable and eventually she tried to leave the situation. "I crept away to the toilet hoping no one would notice," she asserted. But then one of the bikies, whom Rose disliked, saw her and told her that it was her turn next. Some guy, who was not involved earlier, intervened and offered, Rose a degree of protection, but "... for a price," she added. And although Rose vomited in the process, she had to preform oral sex on this guy for the protection that he provided. "It felt like that was part of a payment," she expanded, "...and then he did look after me, after that. He made sure nobody.... I was scared. It's a matter of survival really. I did not want the same thing [group sex or being penetrated with a beer bottle] to happen to me and I knew it would," she said.

Later that same evening, when Rose was taken home, she really enjoyed a ride on a Norton Commando 750 motorcycle. From that point on she was passionate about motorbikes. She enjoyed the speed of the big bikes and the free feeling of travelling at "112 miles per hour.... I just loved it," she reflected. Even so, Rose stayed away from the gang's clubrooms for about two months, until Stuart, whom she still had a crush on, invited her down there again. After acknowledging that she accepted his invitation, Rose described another stream of demoralising events that occurred.

After Stuart had disappeared, she was raped by another bokie who was present at the house. When she told the others about the rape, Rose was accused of spreading lies. She was taunted, ridiculed and denigrated by the men and the women who were there, and she felt betrayed by Stuart. "I don't know whom I held the most contempt for; Stuart, who invited me," she said, "and must have known what lay in wait for me, ... [the person] who raped me, ...or myself,

who trusted my ... friends." Rose never reported the rape to the police because her long time friend, Leigh, did not believe her and demoralised her further when Rose told her.

After this incident occurred Rose remained friends with Leigh and they attended dances held in town every Saturday evening for a few months to keep away from the bikie scene. Then one Saturday after a dance, Leigh wanted to call in on her brothers at the gang clubrooms to see what they were up to. Rose said some trouble started up and someone started to pick on Leigh so her brother, Tom, got two trusted bikies to take Rose and Leigh home. That night Rose started a relationship with the bikie who took her home. Rose became hooked into the thrill of the big bikes again, as she had never travelled so fast on a bike before. She felt as though she was flying and that this guy, having taken her away from what could have been a nasty situation, became her knight-in-shining-armour. Again, all was not as it first appeared.

Rose said that her partner abhorred possessive women and that he was openly involved with other women during their relationship, which lasted for over a year. Rose was so smitten with this guy that she was willing to accept a man who was sleeping around and not say anything to him about it. Her partner had told Rose that he loved her and even though she acknowledged the words were said with no feeling attached to them, she fought to hang on to what they meant to her. Nobody had ever told Rose that they had loved her before and upon reflection, she disclosed that she had no self-esteem during this period of her life.

Rose talked about feeling rejected and abandoned by her father when he left the family home and wonders if her attraction to unavailable men had emotional connections to her childhood. At times, she said that she kidded herself to believe that her partner really cared, that he protected her and kept her safe. She tried to shut out the pain she felt whenever he was unfaithful or resorted to using violence against her. On one occasion, Rose interrupted her partner at the gang clubrooms when he was trying to make it with another woman. "I guess I must have stuffed up his chances because he opened the door and booted me hard in the stomach. He had steel-capped boots on, you know," she said. "I fell to the floor. Even though he'd done that to me, I was convinced that I still loved him." The struggles in this relationship eventually tore Rose apart and when he eventually told her that he did not love her, Rose attempted suicide.

When Rose was in hospital having her stomach pumped, her partner visited and ended the relationship completely. Rose was devastated. She truly believed that he loved her and became even more depressed. It has taken a number of years for Rose to recover from the pain of her past experiences and following her father's footsteps, she said that she became an alcoholic herself. At the age of nineteen, however, Rose became pregnant to another man and gave up drinking. Wanting to be a good mother, she joined Alcoholics Anonymous and slowly began to turn her life around. The process has not been easy for Rose and in many respects, she indicated that this is still an on going process.

Rose has now formed a positive relationship with her father and he too has been sober for a number of years. She became involved with a Christian spiritualist group, which has nurtured a positive outlook on life and has bolstered her self-esteem. Today, Rose is furthering her education and she has completed drug and alcohol counselling papers and two psychotherapy-training modules. She has completed some university papers through an extramural programme and hopes to work in the area of drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Daffodil.

"Daff" was born in 1958 into a warm and caring Maori family, which some people, Daff said, would describe as middle-class. Her father was a salaried man within the building industry and, for a period of his working life, was enlisted with the Maori Battalion to assist during World War II. Daff remembers her father as a hard-working man who was dedicated to his whanau. He built the house in the small rural township in which she and her seven siblings lived during their childhood. And from the sixties onwards, Daff and her family were comfortable and were never really short of anything as her father's income ensured that the family was able to do what ever they wanted. In some respects, Daff felt that she was lucky and it was not until she left home that she realised how some people had it bad in comparison. Daff's father was also deeply spiritual.

Throughout his life, Daff's father learned about, and lived in accordance to the spiritual and cultural beliefs and values that were handed down from his tipuna [elders]. He subsequently passed these learnings on to his tamariki and mokopuna [children and grandchildren]. Daff's father, in the spiritual sense, was a healer within his whanau and she has picked up some of these learnings from him. Her mother, in her own way promoted similar values.

Daff's mother never worked in paid employment, except for a short period during the war effort. This allowed her to be there for her children whenever they wanted or needed her. Her mother held on to the values that she grew up with, which dictated that she did not work. "She was brought up to be a lady...not to go into menial types of jobs or anything," Daff expanded. Her mother gave of herself selflessly, to her husband, to her children and then to others in the community. Daff's mother was always involved with activities going on at the Pa, or local marae and as a result, Daff and her siblings became accustomed to tikanga Maori [the Maori way of doing things] and te kawa o te Marae [traditional marae practices, or Marae protocol]. In addition to this, the Brethren Church influenced Daff's life. "We were always kicked off to Sunday school," she said, "...and I guess I picked up a lot from there."

In consistency with her parent's reverent life, there was never any violence in her house, and the consumption of alcohol was kept to a minimum. Her father would pay a visit to the local Returned Servicemen's Association, perhaps once or twice a year, usually after the ANZAC remembrance parade and at Christmas time. These were the only times that Daff remembers her father drinking alcohol when she was a child. Her parents had their problems to deal with, but the only time Daff knew that they were having a 'private discussion' was when they, knowing the children would not fully understand, went away and spoke in Maori. While Daff laughed and said that she listened anyway, she reiterated that violence was not a part of her upbringing. Having a high-spirited nature herself, Daff took control of her own life from an early age, and against her parents' wishes, she decided to leave school at the age of fifteen.

Daff enjoyed her school days, but as a spirited fifteen-year-old she just grew sick of school. "I wanted to do my own thing," she said, "and they couldn't teach me any more. It was time to leave!" While Daff's parents and the teachers tried to encourage her return, she stood firm and left anyway. "I decided I wasn't going back again. And, I certainly wasn't gonna work in that town," she asserted. Eventually, her parents gave in and Daff was sent to live with her eldest sister who had previously moved to a large city. Daff soon settled in this new environment and found work as a junior bookkeeper. But this work was sterile, in the sense that she found working with numbers all day a non-sociable activity. Within a few months Daff found a factory job, which she enjoyed immensely as she got to know more and more people. In time, Daff went flatting with some friends and her social life flourished. She made new friends and met up with some old ones who had also moved from the small rural township where Daff previously lived, to the city. Through some of the

people she occasioned to meet during this period, Daff learned many strategies to cope with city living. "And this included," Daff laughed, "learning how to use drugs and how not to get arrested!"

Over the next few years Daff enjoyed the freedom of being single and while she embarked on a couple of brief relationships neither of these developed into a long-term commitment. Daff was about nineteen when she first met, through a mutual friend, a patched gang member whom attracted her attention. He was "a great talker," Daff informed, "with a real gift of the gab. That was the attraction, he spoke really well."

This man, who later became her husband and fathered her four children, came from a European working-class family that struggled in their attempts to create a better standard of living for their children. And in doing so, his parents placed a lot of pressure on their children to conform to their expectations. Daff's partner, always the resistant one, rebelled against his parents wishes and to some degree, had chosen to live on the streets when he was about eighteen. Within this context he was, and still is known as one of the original members of a well-known gang that emerged during the early 1970s. This man was extremely loyal to the gang because it offered him the freedom, the flexibility and a general feeling of acceptance that his family was not able to provide.

As Daff and her partner cemented their relationship his loyalties became divided. She said, "I guess for a while his loyalty would have flicked over to me, but as we became more settled together it would have been shared. And, when we separated later, he went back to being loyal, totally, to the gang." In contrast, Daff could not be bothered with the gang scene. "I already had a family," she said. "I didn't feel that the gang was doing anything for me." Eventually Daff and her partner established some suitable boundaries under which their relationship worked for a while. She was clear that if he chose to associate with the gang then he went on his own. "He associated with them [gang members] outside of the home and he never brought them back because that's what I wanted," she expanded.

When Daff and her partner had their children, Daff felt that these boundaries were all the more important, and she was adamant that gang members were not going to become the children's role models. She wanted the children to have a normal type of life rather than be brought up in something that she did not feel was above board anyway. As time went by there were occasional breaches to this couple's arrangements and Daff's partner's gang activities merged into their family

arena. With each breach of these boundaries, Daff's resolve to have gang activities separated from family life strengthened.

On one such occasion Daff's partner brought four gang members home to celebrate one of the children's first birthday. Daff said that these men had her waiting on them and in doing so, diverted her attention away from the children. "They [the gang members] have you running around, and they want this and they want that, and yeah, they take over," she asserted. In noting her partner's apparent acceptance of such actions, Daff was not about to succumb to a position of servitude and she uplifted the children and left the family home. She did not return until late the next day.

Upon her return, and much to her annoyance, she found her partner "as happy as a sand boy," [meaning inebriated from an over indulgence of alcohol and drugs]. "He didn't care," she said. "They [her partner and his gang member friends] lose all sense of responsibility after a while," she added. When her partner sobered up he was reminded that Daff was not about to conform to the gang's ideals and be subservient to him or any other gang members. "I like to have control," she admitted, "and I guess... I have always been able to have control of myself. I didn't want to give that up for anyone," she laughed, "*not even a husband!*" Similarly, Daff's resolve to keep the realities of gang life away from her children was reinforced when she, on rare occasion, visited the gang houses.

Reflecting back on her attendances at gang related functions, Daff found that the women all knew their places and they did what they were told or they got 'a dong' or were beaten. This practice happened often and was not confined to isolated incidents. While Daff was able to challenge and influence her partner away from the gang scene with no fear of a violent reprisal, she did not think she could have ever done that in gang territory. To challenge her partner in front of other gang members would have been seen not just as a put-down of him, but as a put-down for the gang and the members overall. Such lack of respect for the men from women "would result in a dong or several dongs, or something else...[meaning] they could have been put on the block" [gang raped], if the women usurped the males' control.

With regard to gang functions, Daff generally enjoyed herself when she attended, bearing in mind that she knew many of the gang members from outside the gang context. Her partner would often try to persuade her to attend the well-promoted family days that his particular gang organised, but, having misgivings about their purpose, she refused to go. Daff believed the family days were

arranged to try and project an image of unity, which indicated that the gang catered for all the family not just its members.

Daff argued that these family days were not for the women and children to enjoy. Instead, it was the men who gained the most from these and other similarly organised activities. It was the women who worked behind the scenes, and then they were put on show having worked in the kitchen for hours prior. Daff said that the women then either went or were sent home with the children while the men remained to party on. *"And, that's when the Molls would arrive,"* Daff asserted. "Some family day! Real Happy Families!" she exclaimed with contempt. "They [the gang members] make more families!"

On occasion Daff's partner, against her wishes, managed to take two of the eldest children to some of the family day functions and her children were ordered around by various gang members whom were checking the children's ability to obey commands. "Don't stand there. Go over there. Get off that seat," she mimicked in a gruff voice. She felt that family days were like training and testing sessions for the children and reported that her partner essentially allowed the children to be controlled by the other gang members when he took them to the clubrooms. This made the children vulnerable to the gang's underhand ways and ensured that they learned to follow orders, to be submissive and accept violence, and to treat women with disregard and no respect. Daff would be "thrown into a spin" every time her partner took the children to the clubrooms. And she found that the more she challenged him on this the more determined he became to take them there. This became more evident after she and her partner separated after more than ten years of marriage.

Eventually, both Daff and her partner began to lead quite separate lives, with each following their own individual interests. "You can't both be living under the one roof and be going off on different tracks all the time," she said. "It just doesn't work." Several years later, she reflected back and felt sorry for her ex-partner. Firstly, the children have become aware of his involvement in gang violence and have experienced his abusive ways themselves. As a result, they no longer want anything to do with him. Secondly, she feels that he is still searching for that illusive something that is missing from his life.

Daff and her children have moved on since she and her partner separated, and she can now look back and laugh at some of the things that occurred during their time together. The most memorable thing is how she managed to destroy his much-loved patch, a thing that must be respected and

protected to the end. This relic from the 1970s had never been washed, was held together with shoelaces, and was something that her partner treasured dearly. Daff reported that she got this patch and washed it. She smiled and said, “He just went off, just hit the bloody roof! *Now that’s memorable, I’ll never forget that!*”

Eventually the nicely cleaned patch, packed neatly in a plastic bag, went into a rubbish bag and was thrown out with the litter. Daff had found the ultimate in sweet revenge. Two years down the track he was still going on about the destruction of his patch. But Daff chuckled and said, “It was too late ...it was well and truly gone by then.”

Jasmine.

Jasmine, an astute and courageous Maori woman, was born in 1952. At that time her whanau had recently moved from a rural community, where they had enjoyed many treasured aspects of the traditional Maori culture, to a larger town which offered greater employment opportunities and enticed Maori into the Pakeha social system. While Jasmine had no understanding of the kaupapa [meaning] of life in a rural Maori community as she had not lived there, her siblings missed what they had been accustomed to. Adjusting to their new urban environment was not easy.

A dominant feature of Jasmine’s childhood, and that of her nine siblings, was growing up in an extended family. For her this meant that up to twenty adults and children were living, at times, in her house. Her mother who was part German, was industrious and worked hard at picking fruit in the mornings, being a cook during the day and cleaning the local hotel when her day’s work was complete. This was at the time when pubs closed at 6 p.m., and after the patrons departed Jasmine and her siblings would often give their mother a helping hand. Her father, however, found the shift from the rural Maori community, which provided support and a sense of belonging, both physical and spiritual, through whanau, hapu and iwi [family, sub-tribe and tribal affiliations], to the isolation and cumbrous nature of urban city living somewhat daunting.

Jasmine’s father was a fine musician and she recalls him being a beautiful pianist. His ability was recognised by all that knew him and he performed with some of New Zealand’s well-known and acclaimed Maori vocalists. His music not only provided a source of income but

also gave him some much-needed solace. Jasmine's father suffered from culture shock and, she described how, due to his alienation from the urban way of life, he did not know where he was a half of the time except when he was playing his music. Nationwide, this was a period of rapid social change for Maori and for Jasmine's whanau, and the process of urbanisation had a huge impact. Jasmine aptly referred to herself as a "new look child," meaning that she was to reap the advantages of city living and, as a result, experienced a sense of being different to those who knew country living.

Upon reflection, Jasmine finds she cannot fully explain what happened to her during her childhood, but she can remember an intense "sense of wanting mum," of wishing her mother could have been home more often instead of being out at work. One of Jasmine's fondest memories is of coming home from school to the smell of soup cooking. This meant her mum was home and that she could spend some time sitting with her. Generally, there was not much opportunity for that as her mother was so busy. At that time Jasmine blamed her mother for her sense of wanting and loneliness but adulthood has brought about an understanding that her mother was trying to make it by working hard to provide the things they needed. To some degree, Jasmine felt that her mother had been trying to meet Pakeha expectations in the material sense as a means of demonstrating she had 'made it' in this new environment. In hindsight, Jasmine reminisced, she and her siblings needed mum more than the house, the lounge suite and other material possessions which her mother had worked so hard to get.

While Jasmine loved her mother deeply and knew that her mother truly loved her she believes that her mother was naive and too trusting of people, even of those she knew little about. Her mother thought no one would ever harm her children and as a result, Jasmine was often left in situations where people took advantage of her mother's trusting nature. Jasmine described three separate incidents where members of her whanau or their friends sexually abused her. On one occasion an uncle sexually molested Jasmine after her mother insisted Jasmine share her room with him. On another occasion a family friend entered Jasmine's room after a family party and interfered with her. Jasmine also said that her parent's took in a male boarder who "did it constantly," or made inappropriate sexual advances and indecently touched her. Jasmine has, over the years, worked through the resultant trauma that individuals inevitably carry after experiencing sexual abuse and can reflect on up to ten occasions where this happened. Life was not easy at that time and Jasmine battled alone with her burden. She

feared her father would have slit the throat of anyone who touched any of his kids and, in doing so, dared not disclose the abuse to him for fear of his reaction.

As a result, Jasmine became inward and withdrawn. She did not communicate well and carried a lot of unresolved anger. Nighttime became an opportunity for refuge where sleep allowed her some respite from the reality of the days, which she hated. During the day Jasmine's mind was consumed with complex, and often contradictory, thoughts and feelings. She became depressed, had no hope and no sense of a happy future. Jasmine is now able to look back on her life and suggested that she reacted rebelliously after the abuse, against all that her parents wanted for her. As a result, she became involved in crime, particularly in theft and burglary.

At the age of fifteen, Jasmine ran away from home and it was at this time that she became associated with a group of men who were later credited to be the original members of one New Zealand's well-known gangs. These men had a small place on the main street where she lived and Jasmine stayed there for the a few days when she ran away from home. Jasmine thought that the women associated with this gang were beautiful and that they had their lives sorted out. She believed these women, unlike her, were staunch. "They had security, and they had their partners," she said while acknowledging that she did not have a partner at that stage in her life. Jasmine had little admiration for the men in the gang and having decided that she was averse to being told what to do, she eventually realised that this environment was not for her. She then returned home to her whanau, but still associated with the gang. Jasmine said that it was around this time that her criminal activity was beginning to be noted and recorded by the authorities.

On several occasions she found herself in court and on one occasion, Jasmine clearly remembered someone reading out a long list of offences that she was being held responsible for. Jasmine just wanted to shut off at that time and deny what she had done, but finally she acknowledged her guilt and accepted responsibility for her actions. By late sixteen or seventeen Jasmine had left home again and essentially became what is now known as a 'street kid'. She had taken to 'rolling' people. She remembers on one occasion, holding a knife to a man's throat and telling him to hand over his money. And, while initially she did not get caught for this offence, she was held accountable later, after getting caught for doing a 'job' [a burglary] on a shop. Jasmine then spent close to two years in a borstal for her offending. Upon her

release, she still hated the days and nothing much had changed in her life during her confinement.

Eventually Jasmine started going out with, and later married one of the boys who 'partied up' with people involved in the early days of this gang. While her partner was not a patched gang member, their life has remained on the periphery of gangs for many years. Their relationship was particularly volatile with violence being a central and bilateral issue. She talked about a time when she had arrived on her mother's doorstep to seek refuge, only to find her mother could hardly recognise her because of the swelling and bruising after a beating. Jasmine had come to accept and to depend on violence, to a degree, as an indication of love. She recalled how she used to find herself thinking, "Oh God, he doesn't love me any more, he's not hitting me.... Shit I only got one slap this week! Is he slapping someone else?" When reflecting on the way they lived, the violence, both his and hers, and the drunken binges, she described how they both managed to maintain a work ethic, meaning that they both were able to maintain their jobs in spite of their lifestyle, with a sense of pride.

The costs of violence, however, were to become all too clear when the couple lost one of their children at the age of four as a result of an accident. The young girl did not die straight away and depended on life-support machines for the final six weeks of her life. During this time Jasmine considered the existence she and her partner had provided their child. And, remorsefully she explained, "...there wasn't anything that I'd given her in that time, there wasn't anything that I could give her!"

In amongst the pain and the grief the reality hit home. The cost of violence and the price she and her partner paid for it, through the loss of their daughter, was high. Jasmine said, "The price you pay... everyone pays. It's not just the kids. It's ya mother, it's ya father, it's ya brother, it's ya sister. It's never, never just one person." Having paid the price, or having experienced the consequences of living the way she and her partner did, Jasmine sought a different lifestyle for herself, her partner and her whanau.

A seed had been planted which enabled Jasmine to begin a search for something better, and she grew from the experiences she had previously endured. Not giving up hope, Jasmine's world over the next ten or so years gradually improved and in 1987 she turned to religion and found a map to guide her through her life. Religion provided a set of rules that she

understood, that provided direction and answered her many questions. And when the answers came back, they were good. At last, Jasmine felt her wairua [spirit] had come alive and she could then enjoy the light of day. Her fight was now to keep her immediate family together, and both Jasmine and her partner tried to be as wholesome as they could be.

Jasmine's life, still on the periphery of gangs, soon had a completely different focus. The learnings she gained from her experiences provided the skills and understandings that were useful in a new area of her life. Jasmine, having sorted out her own life, eventually went to work in a community agency that assisted people who had difficulties in their lives. As a community worker she has liaised with gangs and assisted when both members and/or partners of members and prospects have sought help in times of crisis. She has worked with youth that have grown up in a lower socioeconomic area that was and to a degree, is still renowned for violence and gang related activity. It is an area where she is constantly reminded of the true costs of violence and gang life.

Jasmine described how she has recently supported a woman, a gang woman in crisis who was seeking an escape from violence and fear. This woman was moved to another town, but she was still vulnerable as her gang member partner has contacts throughout New Zealand who were looking out for her. And today, when Jasmine tries to reduce her commitment to others and move in a different direction with the loving support of her partner, they were willing to assist another person, a gang member with a price on his head who has asked for help. They help him walk through a time of sheer terror and move him to a safe place where, they hope, other gang members will not find him.

Pansy.

Pansy was born in 1963 into a family that worked its way through a labyrinth of trauma and uncertainty, which was related to violence and alcoholism. Outwardly, this was a typical middle-class European family that was progressing and doing well, but in reality the family unit was burdened with stress, and did not provide a place of shelter, comfort and nurture for Pansy or her siblings as they grew up. And as we shall see, little could erase the shame of the family violence, or the despair and loneliness that Pansy felt as a child within this household. Needless to say, it was with some sadness that Pansy reflected back on her childhood.

Although managing to run his own home decorating business, Pansy's father was an alcoholic who had a particularly violent temper. She has witnessed her father's brutal attacks upon her mother and her siblings. These outbursts were frequent and Pansy described, with horrific detail, many incidents, some where knives and other weapons were used with great force in front of the children. On one occasion, one of her three siblings struggled with the effects of severe head injuries that were sustained as a result of a beating from her father. With tears in her eyes, Pansy talked about how she managed to survive many a painful beating from him as well. When reflecting on her father's behaviours, she explained, "...he...beated (sic) us until we were black and blue. We went to school like that." Understandably, Pansy's schooling suffered, her ability to concentrate dwindled and her grades were poor. The violence came not just from her father. Her mother also had a tendency to resort to violence and her mother whipped Pansy with a strap on numerous occasions for minor misdemeanours.

Her mother, who Pansy no longer associates with in any way, managed to run a busy schedule despite of all the violence and abuse. She was employed and was actively involved in the caring profession as a social worker. In her spare time, and during her husband's absences, she supplemented her income by providing sex at home to fee-paying men who often spoke to Pansy and her siblings with sexual innuendos when they phoned up to make an appointment. "It was just awful," Pansy disclosed. It was awful being asked what colour nickers she was wearing, or whether or not she had seen a man's private parts.

In the midst of the abuse, Pansy lost one of her siblings, a much-loved older brother who had provided her with an understanding shoulder to lean on. He died one day after being struck by a car while he was out riding his bike. Burdened with grief and with now having to take the responsibility of being the oldest child, Pansy felt alone and frustrated by all that was happening at that time. It was not long before she began to rebel and to resort to violence herself.

When Pansy turned fourteen, her father was in prison for assaulting her mother. This was not his first time in jail. He had been arrested on a number of occasions for assaulting someone in the family. When her father was in prison this time, Pansy's mother took to Pansy with a belt. It was the last straw. "She attacked me," Pansy recalled, "with a strap. I got the strap off her and attacked her." Pansy reflected back and said, "I think I had just had enough of the beatings. I'd just had enough." As a result of her actions, Pansy was placed in a welfare home.

Pansy stayed at the centre for several weeks before being sent to live with her grandmother. Here she found a degree of emotional security. Her grandmother was a kind woman who Pansy grew closely attached to. Of her special qualities, the ability to always see the good in people stays firmly fixed in Pansy's mind. Pansy's grandmother lived in accordance with her strong Christian beliefs and as a result Pansy adopted a firm religious conviction. And, "Nan," as she called her, became like the mother that Pansy never had.

A valued childhood memory that Pansy holds close to her heart is that of her first birthday with her grandmother. Pansy reminisced, "I never had a birthday party before. Yeah, my Nan gave me my first birthday party!" Life was beginning to improve for Pansy and being nurtured by her grandmother she soon felt better about herself and her life. By the age of fifteen, this was also reflected in her schoolwork and during her fifth form year, Pansy passed all the School Certificate exams that she entered. Eventually, she found herself a job as a trainee in a bank. But at the age of seventeen, Pansy was introduced to the realities of gang life, and as we will see, all hopes of a reasonable future were stolen from her.

Before this time Pansy used to enjoy wandering through the bush, along the beach, through the park, gardens or around her neighbourhood, and she generally loved immersing herself in the serenity and wonder of nature. It was during one of these walks that she felt someone was watching her, but never thought anything of it. As Pansy said, "God would sort of, you know, protect me wherever, you know, because of my religious belief." After this occasion Pansy sensed something was not right, but still carried on and tried to enjoy her walks. Then one day this invading presence made itself known. As Pansy walked in the early evening sun she was attacked by a group of men. "These guys grabbed me," she recounted, "...they grabbed me and they took me to this house, I don't know where... and they ...[pause] brutally raped me. And ...[silence] they just moved into my life."

Pansy was frightened and aghast. She did not really understand what was happening to her. "It was like a nightmare," she explained. "I had ...[silence] eight guys rape me that night. I didn't even know they were gang members." Pansy was too scared to do anything because there were so many of them and they threatened to kill her if she tried to leave. She believed that there was nothing she could do. From that point on, she thought of herself as gang property, something that this particular gang chapter could use as, if, when, and however it wanted. In many ways, Pansy felt like a prisoner. She was escorted everywhere they allowed

her to go to ensure she did not escape and go to the police. There were no more walks in the calm and peaceful realm of nature, there was no more work, there were no goals to set or future goals to look forward to, and Pansy lived in silence for a long time with these gang members.

Pansy described how she lived for the next ten or so years, as “living in hell.” She was humiliated and degraded, beaten, raped and drugged. She described how she felt powerless and scared when she saw a rival gang member being shot from a car she was in and she presented a newspaper clipping that validates the event. She saw a man being dragged behind a car after he had stolen money from the gang, and saw another woman being gang raped. Pansy was beaten on numerous occasions and was hospitalised at least three times. When this occurred, she said nothing about her situation although it was obvious to the doctors and the police that she was the victim of a brutal bashing. The police questioned her about the shooting, mentioned above, when she was put in hospital soon after the shooting occurred, but she was too frightened to say anything. “The police were questioning me and I just didn’t say anything. I told them to just leave me alone.... I’d rather gone to prison than reveal what happened,” she said.

Having witnessed and experienced the violence, Pansy said that the punishment for ‘narking’ [informing or complaining to the authorities] would have been too great for her to bear. Her family and associates from her past had been threatened and she knew that the gang would carry out their threats if she disclosed information. Each time Pansy went to hospital the gang members made their presence known and as soon as Pansy was well enough to get about the hospital ward they took her ‘home’, or rather, back to the ‘pad’ [gang house]. Pansy believed that she knew too much for them to let her go. “You say something or do something, you know the consequences,” she declared. “You know what is going to happen!”

After a while, one of these gang members claimed Pansy as his partner, but being gang property she was still ‘shared’ with the other members for sex and ‘gang bangs’ [group rape]. Her man was sadistically violent and extremely cruel, and whilst he tried to be nice at times, she hated him. She hated him so badly that she had wanted to kill him many a time. And when the gang went ‘on a ‘run’ [a trip way together as a gang] down south for a holiday she attempted to carry out a plan she had devised so he couldn’t hurt anyone else the way he hurt

her. She had managed to hide a gun to use while at a party. Pansy thought this was her only way out as her suicide attempts by trying to overdose on various drugs had been unsuccessful.

Pansy's plan never became a reality as when she discreetly tried to retrieve the hidden gun another gang member, believing she was trying to escape, noticed her. Pansy ran off. And said that, "...it is surprising what you can do when you are *so scared*. You can leap fences and run across paddocks...." Someone must have told her partner that they had seen her go, as he and the other gang members soon tracked her down. Pansy was severely and brutally punished. She removed some of her clothing to display burn scars and tattoos displaying the gang's insignia that remain as a reminder of her 'wrong-doings' for the rest of her life. "Yeah, I was too scared to say anything in case they, they did anything else," she reflected.

As time went by Pansy became numb to the abuse and the rapes, and she shut herself off emotionally. Sadly she related, "I didn't want to live any more. I had no hope. You become cold. It's like your heart's cut; someone's cut your heart out ...and it's like you can't feel anything. You become cold.... Yeah, it's like you turn into just a block of ice. It's the only way I can explain it." Soon Pansy became pregnant and gave birth to a boy. He provided her with a reason to live and to continue on. "I wanted to be there for him," she said. "I ...actually wanted to live," But this time Pansy and the baby were an even greater burden to her partner and the gang because she was now actively looking for a way to take her child away from the gang scene.

Pansy had decided to leave regardless of the consequences. She tried to pack her bags and collect up her child's belongings when she was stopped and severely beaten. But as things eventuated, this beating turned into an avenue for escape. Without describing the actual event to ensure anonymity, Pansy was later left for dead after being beaten and taken to with a machete in some dark alleyway. With her body covered in deep lacerations, which were bleeding profusely she managed to drag herself towards a street light where, she said, a passer-by saw her and called the police and an ambulance. Obviously, Pansy survived this attack, but she partially undressed herself to reveal a severely disfigured body, covered with large obtrusive scars that are consistent with her description of events. While one man was arrested and charged with attempted murder for this attack the remaining gang members remained free to intimidate, threaten and terrorise Pansy and her family in the hope that she would back down from giving evidence. But Pansy had made her mind up. Having survived

the surgery and thinking of her baby who needed a mother, she mustered all the strength could to testify against her offenders in court. The arrested man was convicted and sent to prison. And when he was released, he returned to his life of destruction and crime. She displayed more newspaper clippings, which indicated that this man was later sent back to prison for subsequent violent offences.

After the trial Pansy worked hard to get her life sorted out. Getting custody of her son was another nightmare. Pansy believed that her lawyer felt intimidated and feared retaliation from the gang. And she described the feelings of frustration and powerlessness that she felt as she fought for three years to get custody of her son. For the next few years Pansy led a closed and solitary life, not going anywhere or venturing far from the security of her home, which was protected by two large, vicious guard dogs.

The gang still makes their presence known and the police appear to be keeping a watchful eye on the situation. Pansy produced documents that confirm this and she said that she “will never be free.” She made reference to death being the only real door to peace and freedom from this gang. “There are too many of them,” she said. “Wherever you go in New Zealand they are just everywhere. You can’t hide. You can only keep yourself as safe as you can.” Finally, the seclusion and her experiences have impacted on Pansy’s religious beliefs.

Pansy has now lost faith in God and does not go to church or Bible studies any more. She no longer prays because, she said, “God was pretty cruel...to put me through all that.” On the other hand, she acknowledged a positive side to what she has been through. “It’s made me into a very stronger person today. I can tolerate a lot and there are people I can help ’cause I am strong,” she expanded. With an extremely positive attitude Pansy to a degree, still lives by the traditional Christian values that her grandmother instilled and always tries to look for good in others. This attitude has enabled Pansy to move on with her life despite her traumatic background. She has rebuilt a positive relationship with her father and he is always there for her, providing care and support in times of need.

Pansy has begun to recover from her ordeal. She no longer hides herself away, but remains guarded and cautious. She still tends to look behind when she senses someone coming up behind her. Building confidence and an ability to have some trust in others have been major hurdles to overcome and meant taking some evaluated risks. For example, she recently got

married. This time her partner is an understanding, caring and patient man who never places her under any control or pressure. He has accepted Pansy's son as his own and they have started their own family. Pansy smiled and said that they are both positive about their future.

Rhododendron.

Rhodo, who was born during 1955, described herself and her life as "a bit of a contradiction," a balancing act between periods of immense insecurity and phases where she felt confident and powerful. She chose her pseudonym to represent this, acknowledging that she liked the rhododendron's delicate flower, which contrasts sharply with the rugged, woody centre that gives strength to this shrub.

Although Rhodo has a fair complexion and once used to describe herself as a European, she now likes to acknowledge that she has a bit of Maori in her ancestral background. Her working class parents brought Rhodo and her siblings up in a rural community situated near a small coastal settlement on the East Coast of the North Island. Her mother had given up her life as a teacher in a large urban city when she married to fit in with her husband's rural family base. Rhodo grew up on her paternal grandfather's farm, where her mother became isolated as she found it hard trying to fit in with the rural community's members who were really stuck in their ways. The isolation and loneliness were made worse by Rhodo's father's work commitments. He spent long periods of time away from the family and farm working a great portion of the time at sea as a fisherman did. Upon reflection, Rhodo acknowledged that she missed her father's presence. She said:

...our father didn't have enough to do with us. We needed more attention from our father. He was just away so much. Plus, I never remember being cuddled, or kissed, or anything like that from him, but ... [silence] we still had lots of fun, like my siblings, we had each other, and being on a big farm, we had lots to do.

Having had four children of her own, Rhodo thought that her father's absences were abusive toward her mother, in that he just left her without any support to help with rearing the children, or with maintaining the home and working on the farm when required. A prominent feature of Rhodo's childhood that stays firmly entrenched in her memory, was the arguments that occurred when her father returned home during long weekends, holidays and breaks in his employment situation. Domestic violence was not a major concern during Rhodo's

childhood, as her father never assaulted her mother during these arguments. On the other hand, Rhodo could remember her mother hitting her father on occasion and she indicated that the arguments caused her considerable stress.

Yeah, they argued a lot. I remember being absolutely, you know, just feeling really sick when the arguments would start. ...[silence], just feeling sick. And, then later, as I got older, I became harder and harder until I didn't really care about them at all.

Rhodo has five siblings, all sisters. The first four, including Rhodo were born one year apart and formed a close unit. The fifth sister was born when Rhodo was about ten. Her parents desperately wanted a son, and their hopes were never fulfilled in this regard. Subsequently, the drive that her parents had to conceive a son impacted on Rhodo's self esteem. Her mother never acknowledged her daughters' femaleness and this led Rhodo to believe that being female was second best. As an adolescent, Rhodo was embarrassed and shameful of herself and her body. Being extremely self-conscious, she would deliberately slouch so her developing breasts remained less obvious. Her mother's lack of understanding in this regard is highlighted in Rhodo's worst childhood memory:

... my mother pulled me out of the bath when I was fourteen 'cause my eldest sister was, wanted to get in. I had been in over the time limit, and Mum came in and pulled me out of the bath. I was really shy...and I found it shameful...She didn't teach us about sex, about menstruation, stuff like that, she just gave us books or left them lying around and I always felt embarrassed. And, they never had sons; they always wanted a son... So when she pulled me out of the bath that was the most horrible thing.

In some respects Rhodo's mother's attitude towards her daughters made it easier for Rhodo to adapt to her schooling environment. She hated being at home with her mother and enjoyed being at school with her sisters, where she was a favoured student with many of her teachers.

Rhodo started attending school when she was four and this early start gave her a lot of confidence within the school system. She did well at school and in a sense became "a real goodiegood" in terms of her schoolwork. She passed her School Certificate without much extra effort despite the fact that her high school did not have teachers for some subjects, such as biology, which Rhodo managed to pass through her own effort. At the age of sixteen, Rhodo left school and attempted to secure employment in the nearby city where she went to

live with her sister. Initially, Rhodo tried to find work in an office; but typing was not one of her strongest points. Eventually she managed to get temporary work in an old people's home and this was sufficient until she turned seventeen and was accepted into nursing school.

Rhodo enjoyed nursing school and did well in her exams, but she never managed to complete the practical hours required to become a registered nurse. She had been in a relationship with a man since she was nearly eighteen and in her final year of nursing training, at the age of twenty, she realised that the relationship was not working well. Rhodo recalled, "I didn't really like him, but I thought I was stuck with him forever as I couldn't bring myself to leave. Emotionally, I had to be with him." And, rather than leave the relationship, Rhodo decided to give up nursing and get pregnant, hoping that a baby would bring something more to their lives.

Rhodo gave birth to a baby boy and when he was nine months old, she and her partner decided to get married. Less than two years later Rhodo found her relationship was not fulfilling her needs, nothing had changed and she still disliked her partner. She decided to take her son and return to her parents' home. Later she divorced this man. Not long after her marriage break up, Rhodo struggled with an acute bout of depression. Although she managed to care for her son, she found herself going down hill emotionally and felt trapped in a deep dark tunnel. Her parents prompted her to get some help with her depression and she went to some group therapy sessions for a short while. Her doctor prescribed sedatives, but these made her feel worse. "After three days," she said, "I was walking around like a zombie...so I stopped taking them."

Rhodo said that her self-esteem was very low and that she knew that she had to stop the negative thinking. This was something she had to do by herself and finding that alcohol provided some respite, she began to frequent hotels and bars more often. Getting tiddly helped to make her feel better about herself. In time, Rhodo moved back to the city and gradually, over the next two years, she came out of her depression. In hindsight, Rhodo believed that she was still insecure and that she started to look for a man to marry. She would fantasize about any man she went out with, even if he was a one-night stand. She would imagine the man falling in love and proposing marriage to her. At this time Rhodo thought that she was in control of her situation and in particular, in control of the men who went out with her. She would feel confident and felt as though she was the one to end the series of short-term

relationships that she encountered during this period of her life. As Rhodo neared the age of twenty-six, one of the men that she encountered introduced her to some motorcycle club members during, what she now believes, was a drug dealing negotiation.

While Rhodo did not approve of the bikie scene and thought that the club's members were a bunch of losers, she thought it was all a bit of a thrill when she associated with them. Over the next few months she moved in on the periphery of the gang scene, attending parties at the clubrooms or patronising the tavern that club members frequented. One evening she met a man, referred to here as Bruce, who was later to become her second husband. Rhodo described this meeting:

I went into the public bar with my girlfriend, not with the bikies, but they were there. I had a look around and I was a bit tiddly, half drunk and I saw Bruce sitting up at the bar like a little lost boy. Ah, I thought that I'd go and talk to this, you know, tough bikie [laugh], see what I could do [laugh]. So I went up, I just went over and asked him what his name was. I was... I have got a bit of an anti-male attitude as well so for me it was all a bit of a game. You know, they think they are tough... He didn't tell me to fuck off or anything, he just went along with my little game. It was quite amusing.

We went back to the pad for a while and then he came back to my place. Well, straight away, I had a plan, straight away, from that point on, that I was gonna get him out of it [the gang]. And, you know, um, it just developed from there really. He just sort of gave in to my manipulation, in a way, to what I was planning, going for, in a way... At the same time there was a part of me that ah... [silence], well he played his games with me later on. You know, it all came back on me.

From that night Rhodo and Bruce became partners. Initially, Rhodo would spend weekends and the odd night with Bruce at the gang's clubrooms, but as the relationship developed he gradually moved into Rhodo's home.

Being accepted into the gang's networks was straightforward and Rhodo was not aware of any anti-feeling or animosity towards her from the males. There was a degree of respect displayed towards her that emerged from the status Bruce held within the club. Bruce had a reputation for being 'staunch'; he was unafraid of anyone or anything and had proven his ability to fight till the end. This, Rhodo indicated, provided her with elements of power and protection.

I believe that was because Bruce was um, the Vice-President and he was not scared of anyone. They [other gang members] were scared of him, a lot of them. So, um, really, I sort of had total protection. I was never scared. I was quite vocal and said...what I thought, at times. And they were too scared to do anything. They would have had to deal with Bruce, and I would have just ... said that I didn't say it.

In addition, Rhodo was not afraid of her partner. Bruce did not use physical violence against Rhodo when he was angry or upset. Rhodo described the worst case scenario of his abuse within their relationship as involving verbal abuse and him sending a plate of food flying through the room. No threat of physical violence meant that she could express her thoughts to Bruce and other gang members, derogatory or not, and if difficulties did arise, she could easily talk her way out of any trouble through Bruce.

Rhodo still remained cautious, at times, as she knew Bruce's loyalty in the first instance belonged to the gang and that she came second in this regard. And although she hated this, she did not want to jeopardise their relationship at that time. She had other, long-term plans in mind and had planned to get Bruce away from the gang altogether. This meant that she had to play the game of fitting into the gang's role for women, being defined as second rate, the cook, and the cleaner who knew her place. "But it was all a facade," Rhodo said, "it was only a means to an end." Maintaining this facade, together with Bruce's reputation, ensured that the men accepted Rhodo, but her dealings with the other women were somewhat acrimonious.

Although Rhodo managed to form positive relationships with a few of the women associated with the gang, namely two friendly, outgoing individuals, she remained suspicious about the motives of the other women involved. Similarly, these women were suspicious of Rhodo and they remained cautious around her. They did not really know how to take her and many of them watched her all the time. Rhodo disclosed that she felt that she was better than the other women were. And although she acknowledged that her attitude was not right, she believed that the other women, even the few she had made friends with, slept around with lots of men, while she remained committed to Bruce.

Rhodo was scared of losing Bruce and dreaded when he went on the club's bike runs without her. "I was so insecure," she recalled. "I mean, girls were hanging around like dogs, I mean, like flies. And um, I knew that if he wanted to, he could sleep with any of ... [silence] them." Despite the underlying insecurities in this area of Rhodo's life, she often drew on a personal

sense of power, which derived from her plan to get Bruce out of the club, away from the other gang members, and hence, away from the threat of these women. As she explained:

Even power, that's what I was into with Bruce. In a way I was on a power trip too... It was not, it was not that I was with gang members, it was what I did with one of the staunch gang members. I felt I had managed to even though it was tittering at times, I held up a, you know, 'Well, look what I've done, no one else could do it. And, I'm gonna get him out of it [the gang] too. See what you can do about it,' attitude, that type of thing you know.

At times Rhodo's sense of personal power was reinforced by her ability to convince her partner that certain things needed to be done. She caused fights and was instrumental in getting an outsider, a female, knocked out. This woman had stolen from a friend of Rhodo's. Rhodo said, "I set her up and [name] knocked her out." Rhodo's sense of personal power was bolstered by the protection that being connected with the gang offered. She used to feel good when she could intimidate others, such as people outside the gang, because of her connections. At other times, however, she would run the gang down, depending on her needs and wants at that particular time. Even so, Rhodo felt that her own insecurity was the most negative aspect of gang life for her. She hoped to alleviate some of her insecurity by pulling Bruce away, and two years after Rhodo met Bruce, he handed in his patch and left the gang life behind.

Rhodo talked about three different approaches that she used to move Bruce away from his gang family. In the first instance she would run down and condemn some of the gang members and their lives. Rhodo did this when Bruce and she were away from the clubrooms and the other gang members, and she did this in a gentle manner, not going too far in her criticism as to cause Bruce to become resentful.

Secondly, she showed him that there was a different way of life away from the gang scene. Once Rhodo and Bruce had an argument and he went to live at the clubrooms for a few days. Rhodo sought support from some relatives who had become Christians, as she feared Bruce would not return to her. She said that Christian beliefs provided her with a sense of security that came not from a man, but from God. When Bruce returned home, Rhodo insisted that they could not resume their relationship unless they married. Upon reflection, Rhodo said that she put it under the guise of being Christian. In some aspects, she had adopted Christian

beliefs, but in others she felt that she manipulated the situation to suit her own agenda. Within six or eight weeks Bruce and Rhodo married, and a few months later, he left the gang. Rhodo believed that her marriage to Bruce was a milestone in the gang's history as no gang member had got married since the gang had formed in the 1970s. And she knew that she had made some enemies within the gang, as the remaining gang members acknowledged that they felt Bruce's leaving was a big loss.

The third stage that Rhodo discussed involved arranging Bruce's life so he started making friends with people outside the gang. She knew that she had to fill the gap that would be left in his life so he would not need the gang so much. She drew support from her Christian friends to achieve this and eventually, Bruce started to question his own life. As he became more aware of evil and began to acknowledge the reality of evil, he slowly stopped going to the clubrooms. Within a short time, Bruce gave up drinking alcohol and while he maintained an interest in the big bikes, he settled down as a family man.

Life for Rhodo and Bruce has not been without its ups and downs since they withdrew from the gang scene. For example, the couple has a young family and they have bought a house. Bruce was then made redundant, which made their life difficult for a while. They have separated on a number of occasions and subsequently resumed their relationship. While the connection with a Christian based church was maintained for around ten years and had provided support for the couple after Bruce left the gang, Rhodo explained, that this was no longer needed. Rhodo has become more secure within herself and does not need either the church or a man any more. "I know that I can live without them," she said.

Rhodo now feels that she has been the on brakes her partner's life, and has realised that after fifteen or so years that not much has changed. She now believes that if she was not controlling Bruce's life that he would revert back to what he used to be, which is a disappointment for her. He is still a person who flounders around a bit, who on occasion turns to alcohol and who has, at times, stated that he may return to the gang if they finally choose to separate and go their own ways. The gang's members still welcome him, and Bruce does not receive a lot of support elsewhere in his life. Rhodo is now more consciously aware that the gang is always there should he decide to return and she does not doubt that he would. Rhodo's life, in some ways, is still pivoting on contradictions, the difference being that she now has a strong sense of self. Her security now comes from within.

Violet.

Violet, born in 1967, drew deeply on her cigarette. She lifted her head and tried to present a heartening smile, but her puffy, red eyes revealed that it had not been a good day. “Would you believe, I’ve just phoned the clairvoyant, again!” she reported. The phone call was a plea for reassurance that the violence that she had previously experienced was not about to start up again. A drug deal had recently gone wrong and the gang had been pressuring her partner, a former patched member, for the missing money. Violet suggested that it was all her fault, as she had not counted the money when she made ‘the drop’ or handed over the marijuana. Her partner, out for the time being, was both perturbed and outraged. This did not deter Violet’s interest in sharing her story and she found reflecting back on her childhood a welcome distraction from the predicament that she was in.

Violet grew up in a middle-class, bi-cultural family. Her mother was a warm and caring Rarotongan woman who took great pride in being a traditional wife and mother. Violet’s father was a European seaman, which meant that he spent long periods of time away from home. This arrangement had its down side for Violet, particularly in terms of establishing her own cultural or ethnic identity, and she had struggled, and still struggles, with constantly being asked to choose a single cultural position for herself. She described herself as “a mongrel or a bit of fruit salad” who draws on a Rarotongan, Maori, European and Greek ancestral heritage. On the positive side, she had a very strong, loving family which was reasonably well off.

Her father had a good-paying job and thus money was available for the necessities of life and even though her father was a frugal man, she never went without or had to worry about the cost of things. Her parents had a good relationship and they were happy. There was no violence or abuse, no excessive use of alcohol or drugs, and, she asserted, nobody was ever afraid to be themselves. Violet had a strong bond with her grandfather who supported the family when her father was away with his work. In fact, she emphasised that he essentially brought up her younger brothers.

Being a deeply spiritual man, Violet’s grandfather ensured Christian values and beliefs were upheld and he was reasonably strict in this regard, even though he did not adhere to them himself at times. Being the eldest child, Violet held a responsible position within the family

unit and was expected to set a good example for her siblings. This responsibility frustrated and riled Violet enough to ignite the rebel in her. "I didn't want the good-girl image," she said. "*I wanted that bad-girl image,*" similar to that of her brother.

In his early teens, her younger brother, being defiant and unruly, and known as the black sheep of the family, often associated with the street kids in the lower middle-class area where they lived. As time progressed he moved more into the gang scene and eventually became a patched member of a well-established gang. It was through her brother's connections that Violet, aged around fourteen, became connected to the gang and its street kid supporters. And, from the age of seventeen the gang played a more prominent role in her life.

Initially Violet was attracted to the strength of the men associated with the gang. "They looked strong," she asserted, "they just looked strong." Their ability to go against the norm simply fed her rebellious streak and fitted in with the bad-girl image that she sought. And the gang soon provided a home away from home. Having a bright and bubbly personality, she made friends easily with both the gang members and their supporters. They accepted her and her colour or ethnic background was not judged. Being accepted and welcomed was rewarding when contrasted with her encounters in the white middle-class social settings where she felt she was being judged by her colour. Within the gang context, Violet was not left feeling hurt or confused and could relax and enjoy herself by being herself. As we will see, however, the gang did not remain a safe environment for long.

At about eighteen Violet entered a long-term relationship with a patched gang member whom she saw as being strong. He turned out also to be jealous and possessive, even though his friends always stuck up for her or told him that he was lucky to have her. He became controlling and violent. Violet said that she made some of the hidings or beatings that she got from him worse when she stuck up for herself. She could not just sit there like a mindless person, and take it all calmly. As the violence increased Violet started to question her life. While she never really agreed with a lot of the gang activity that was happening around her such as, the way some gang members treated their partners, the drug dealing, the crime and so on, she remained quiet about this. "*Violence silences you!*" she declared. And gradually she got caught up in the drug dealing herself.

Violet's involvement in drug dealing emerged through necessity, not want. She had a child and was struggling to manage financially on the Domestic Purposes Benefit. And although her partner lived with Violet and the child, he did not contribute financially to the household running costs. Furthermore, he brought his mates back to stay with them and she had to feed them, put a roof over their heads, do their washing and so on, while they contributed nothing. "*Not even a loaf of bread!*" she implored, for greater understanding. Not wanting to become dependent on them, she started to deal drugs herself. She did not want to ask these gang members for support. "There is always a pay-back time," she asserted, "*there always is!*" Five years into the relationship with her partner, and a number of drug deals later, Violet realised that they were no better off, financially or emotionally, for all her efforts.

At times Violet had to fix up all his deals, and she generally paid for any unaccounted money herself as she did not want any trouble. She also tried to make her partner realise that some other gang members were using them as she felt that she and her partner were carrying all the risk involved, while other, certain gang members, were being cushioned from the risks and the law. On some occasions others such as, her mother and sister, were also put at risk. As Violet explained:

Anyway, one deal went wrong. And they [the gang] said that there was more money owing but there wasn't more money owing. Anyway, [partner's name] wasn't home one time. I had my mum and my sister with me as they had visited. He [a gang member at the door] said, "Is [partner's name] home?" I said, "No, he's not home. He's gone fishing." And I say, "If you call back later," you know, "you might catch him at home." Then I just got, "Don't you fuckin' tell me what to do." I just stood there, eye contact all the time and I started screaming out.

The next thing I knew, I had a fist in my mouth and four of the guys got out of the car and stood by the car. Next thing, my mum's there and um, she's saying, "Don't hit my daughter." I'm telling Mum to, "Just be quiet," you know, rather than make things worse. Just keep the peace 'cause I know that if you don't say anything they'll leave. Ah, another young fella pushed his way through and um, if it wasn't for my mum being there, I believe I would have been raped. But I stood strong all the time and he punched over my mum. When they left my mum goes, "Call the cops." I go, "You can't, Mum," because we had half a pound [of drugs] up in the ceiling and um, some other gears that shouldn't have been in the house, guns and stuff. There was nothing I could do. I never said anything. You know, he was calling me names and everything. I couldn't answer him back and I just took everything, all this shit, and I said to myself that they are only words. And my sister was trying to ring the cops. Thank God, she didn't get through 'cause of all that stuff.

After a while, incidents like the one described above, and her partner's abusive behaviour started to take their toll on the family. Violet, by this time, had another child and he, then aged around four, would tell Violet how he would make things right. Violet reflected back and said, "He would say, 'When I get big, Mum, I'm gonna beat him [Dad] up and I'm gonna kill him, Mum. I'm not scared like you are.'" And she added, "Knives to my throat, um, being beaten up. Kids being witnesses to it.... I've put them through something that I never went through." On several occasions, she tried to leave this situation and make a better life for her and her children, but whenever she left she eventually found herself returning, and hoping that things had changed.

Violet was admitted into Women's Refuge safe houses on several different occasions. And each time she tried to leave her partner and the gang scene behind, she sought the assistance of counsellors and social workers. One time she left and managed to go to Australia to live for a year. During this year away her partner moved in with another woman and Violet thought that it would be safe to return to New Zealand, thinking that they would not get back together again. But on her arrival he ventured back into her life. This time, Violet explained, they both went to counselling together and her partner began to make some positive changes in his life. His use of physical violence has stopped, Violet reported, and she described how, having a shower one-day, she found a bruise. "It's crazy," she said, "I discovered a bruise that I had done. *Can you imagine how excited I was to find a bruise that I'd done myself?* You know, instead of having a shower and being covered in bruises that he'd done. I told him that he hadn't hit me for over a year. He hasn't hit me for eighteen months now." But as she talked the reality of her current situation hit home and Violet shuddered. She was worried. She was scared and she wanted some reassurance, some reassurance that the violence and abuse was not going to start up again. Yes, her partner had made some changes; he had handed in his patch and withdrawn from much of the gang activity. But it was difficult trying to get rid of the old friends, the gang members who still try to get him to sell their dope, who still try to encourage him to drop back into their scene.

Violet's final words were questions. She asked:

Who do you believe your mates or your family? The whole thing is [that after twelve or so years] we were slowly getting somewhere. How long is it going to take? How much longer? How long do you have to wait? Why did he have to fire all that shit off for his mates? Today, after our little episode, today, like it's the drugs again. That's

what hurts the most. It's drugs again with another gang member and he's more worried about his gang member friends than he is our home and our kids.... What about what he owes the kids? That is what hurts.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE WOMEN & THEIR FAMILY BACKGROUNDS.

Introduction.

The gangs that the gang-related women interviewed were associated with were, and still are predominantly situated within subcultures of staunch masculinity, violence, and crime and criminality. Most people outside the gang context are aware of the gangs' mistreatment of women and for the inquiring mind, questions arise as to how and why young women become involved with groups that clearly downgrade, abuse and violate women. With these queries in mind, an exploration of the gang-related women's backgrounds produces a number of factors that are worthy of consideration and discussion. This section reflects on the women's families of origin and socio-economic status, and the family dynamics that operated during the course of their childhoods. The impact of parental absence, addictions and their chosen disciplinary practices are considered, as too are the effects of domestic/family violence and sexual abuse.

Family of Origin and Socio-Economic Status.

Most of the women interviewed [8/10] came from working class families and while no women presented evidence of abject hardship, the reality of their social position was illustrated through talk along themes of *getting by*, or *struggling to make it* in the material sense. Only two women said they came from middle-class families although they were uncomfortable with the label. For example, Daff was well aware of differences between her family and other Maori families, in that her family always had enough money to do what they wanted. When she left home as a teenager, however, she realised how some people struggled to survive on low incomes. But being Maori, she expressed difficulty associating herself with the label 'middle-class' that is normally associated with Pakeha middle-class assumptions and values. And Daff indicated that the learnings and understandings of life that she incorporates in her identity emerge from traditional Maori culture, especially the *kawa* and *tikanga* of her family *marae*.

Violet talked about how she came to believe that people did not have to care about money or the cost of things. "I grew up not thinking that you needed money," she said. "You don't need money, live off love. You got it, you give it." But in her late teens, when Violet's understanding of financial commitments further developed, she found it difficult to relate to

many middle-class assumptions regarding money, such as the need for saving, or being frugal at times. She recalled telling her mother that she would never go out with a Pakeha even though her father was a Pakeha, "... 'cause Dad's a tightarse with his money." Instead, Violet had a preference for Maori men whom she felt were more likely to follow cultural practices of sharing and giving within the whanau; thus she rejected the more individualistic nature of the middle-class Pakeha side of her family and community. In most cases, the women interviewed appeared to accept their parents' social position and occupations with no negative projections highlighted.

Two of the women interviewed, however, reported immense difficulty accepting or coming to terms with their mothers' occupations. Pansy reflected on how awful it was growing up with a mother who was a prostitute whose clients made sexual advances towards Pansy and her siblings. Similarly, Lily spoke of having to cope with her mother working the ships. She acknowledged feeling a lot of bitterness from being shifted around to other whanau members while her mother was off doing her own thing. Both women reflected on grappling with long-term insecurity that had some connections back to their mothers' area of work. This sense of insecurity was inevitably compounded by other dynamics that operated in the family context.

Parents' marital or relationship breakdowns, frequent parental absence, the effects of a parent's substance abuse or addictions, abusive disciplinary practices, and having witnessed, heard or experienced physical or sexual abuse were presented as factors that increased the feelings of insecurity. It was soon apparent that these were to be the prominent themes that emerged throughout many of the interviews. And, as will be illustrated, these themes far outweighed any general socio-economic considerations reflected on in the women's stories or backgrounds.

Parents' Marital/Relationship Break-up, Parental Absence and Parental Addictions or Substance Abuse.

Six of the ten gang-related women discussed the breakdown of their parents' marriage or relationship [see Table 1]. The circumstances surrounding these separations were vividly remembered and it is evident that they had a huge impact on the lives of the women. At the time of the interviews, some women, like Daisy, talked about still working through issues that emerged from parental relationship issues. Others reflected on difficulties that they had encountered at the time their parents separated. Rose, for example, spoke about how horrible

it was when her mother picked on her because Rose reminded her mother of her father. She discussed how she would engage in placatory behaviours, such as buying her parents presents to try to cheer them up or to make the situation more tolerable. Although Rose's parents argued often and her father resorted to violence during domestic disputes, Rose missed her father immensely when he left the family home. Retrospectively, Rose said:

He left when I was 13 and that's when I got meningitis and nearly died. And um, he disappeared for nearly five years and it was hard. 'cause I was his favourite, you see, and that was hard too. It's because I thought...[*silence*]. And um, yeah, I was a bit confused about him; he was a very good father when he wasn't drunk.... He'd help us with our homework and he'd take time to talk to us and he told us that all people were born equal. But when he was drunk he didn't treat my mother like an equal and I was a bit confused about that. Hmmmm.... But it was hard for me because he had just disappeared off the earth and I didn't know where he was and we never heard from him. My brother didn't give a hoot about that. I did. I think I was the only one that did, actually.

As with Rose, other women reported that the absence of a parent, or in some cases, a parental figure was to facilitate an overwhelming sense of insecurity. Lily, who was sent to live with her grandmother, was able to articulate her feeling in this regard:

From there [being shifted around the family] comes a lot of bitterness. Bitterness comes from when I had been moved around when I was young. And losing my grandmother was a big thing for me. Not feeling loved by my mother and knowing that the man she was with at the time wasn't really my dad. There was just no security really for me. I didn't feel secure anywhere, yeah.

At the age of four, Lily's insecurity compounded when her grandmother died and she was then sent to live with her mother's sister. It becomes clear that the family support available to Lily's mother did not provide Lily with a sense of belonging, nor did it facilitate any sense of security, safety or connectedness within the family context.

Those women who grew up with stepparents, or who lived with their extended family also talked of missing their mothers or fathers. Some women linked feelings of confusion and bitterness around not knowing their fathers to their personal acts of rebelliousness during their adolescence. Lily and Thistle, for example, mulled over feelings of confusion, bitterness and anger when they found out the men that they thought were their biological fathers were not. Thistle discussed running away and although she acknowledged other factors that exacerbated

these feelings, including the time being the typical teenage stage of life, she believed that she “rebelled to the limit.” At the time of the interview, Thistle voiced some sympathy towards her parents for having to cope with her and her antics. Pansy, however, noted her father’s absences were when he was arrested for violence. At these times Pansy became confused and missed her father, especially when she came into conflict with her mother. At one stage Pansy rebelled against her mother’s violence and, having become so frustrated and angry, she turned and attacked her mother in response.

Table 1: Parental Issues that Influenced Childhood: Noting Parents’ Marital/Relationship Break-up, Frequent Parental Absence and/or Parental Addictions.

Participant	Experienced Parents’ Marital/Relationship Break-up	Frequent Parental Absence	Reported Parental Substance Abuse/Addictions
Pansy	✓	✓(Father)	✓(alcoholism)
Jasmine	*	✓(Mother) ♦	*(immersed in music)
Daff	*	*	*
Rose	✓	✓(Father)	✓(alcoholism)
Daisy	✓	✓(Father)	✓(drinking/gambling)
Lily	✓	✓(Mother)	✓(heavy drinking)
Freesia	✓	✓(Father)	✓(heavy drinking)
Thistle	✓	✓(Father)	✓(heavy drinking)
Violet	*	✓(Father) ♦	*
Rhodo	*	✓(Father) ♦	*

* No, Not disclosed

♦ Parental absence related to long hours away from home with work or for other reasons not associated with parental divorce or separation.

As illustrated in Table 1, parental absence was reported in most of the interviews [9/10], although not all absence was related to marriage breakdown. Jasmine, Violet and Rhodo talked about the effects of having parents absent from home for long periods of time due to work commitments. Jasmine explained how she longed for more time with her mother who was often away from home working long hours trying to make ends meet. Violet talked about her father spending much time at sea and of having to take on a lot of responsibility being the eldest girl. Although Violet’s maternal grandfather supported Violet’s family when her father was away, there was a heavy expectation placed on Violet to support her mother and set a good example for her siblings. This frustrated Violet, particularly when she compared her family obligations with her brothers’ relative freedom. This evoked a sense of injustice and,

while remaining protective of her younger brother, she began to admire and emulate his rebellious nature.

Rhodo reflected on not having enough time or attention from her father, on not remembering the hugs and kisses from her father and on how his working away from home impacted on her mother. Retrospectively, Rhodo believed that her father's absences were hard on her mother and acknowledged that she was isolated bringing her children up within a rural community with little or no support. Rhodo said:

And, ahh, I think that put extra strain on Mum, plus we weren't very um, understanding children, you know, like a 14, 13, 12, and a 11 year old and stuff like that, you know. We didn't help her much. Dad was away a lot... it was Mum that had to cope with the lot, a lot of things.

For seven of the ten women interviewed, parental absence was also noted on a slightly different level. This absence, whether the parent was at home or not, was related to substance abuse or addictions meaning that their parents may have been present in the physical sense but were absent in terms of not being available to provide physical, emotional and/or spiritual support for their children.

Both Pansy and Rose described their fathers as recovering alcoholics and reflected on times that they were scared when Dad was drunk. Daisy, Freesia and Thistle discussed their fathers' or stepfathers' heavy drinking sessions that often resulted in arguments. Lily indicated that her mother was frequently intoxicated. Many women reported childhood feelings of shame or embarrassment about their parents' drinking habits and in some cases this influenced how these women, as children, related with their peers. For example, Rose talked about her one close friend and of not wanting others to know what her family was like.

...I felt very alone, but she was my friend and she knew what was going on at home and I was too scared to bring anybody else home.... There was that shame thing attached to me being at home, you know. I didn't want them [other friends] to see who I really was, or how I was. I never had them at home, you know.

Rose went on to discuss how she would love to escape the reality of her childhood life by going to the beach. There she was free of this shame and embarrassment; she could forget her

home life for a time and have fun playing in the sand dunes. But in the back of her mind she knew that she had to return to alcohol-laden arguments and family strife.

Only two women, Daff and Violet, stated categorically that their parents had no alcohol related problems. Daff indicated that there was never a lot of drinking in her household. Her father would have the occasional drink, once or twice a year, at the local Returned Servicemen's Association. Violet's father drank on occasion too, but she indicated that he merely mellowed out after a few drinks. "He'd drink, he was happy and he'd go to sleep. Mum was happy with that," she said. Other concerns included Daisy's report that gambling had caused arguments and friction in her family and Jasmine's reflection on her father's disconnectedness from his family when he found solace from an alien Pakeha environment within his music.

Gradually, as talk about family backgrounds continued through the interview process, issues related to parental disciplinary practices, domestic violence and abuse, and sexual abuse began to emerge.

Parental Disciplinary Practices, Domestic/Family Violence and Abuse, and Personal Experience of Sexual Abuse.

When attempting to provide insights into their family dynamics, seven out of the ten women interviewed used the terms 'strict' and/or 'religious' in relation to their upbringing. Generally these terms were connected to parental disciplinary practices. These terms have been further differentiated along lines of loving discipline with no physical punishment and discipline with physical punishment, which in today's climate is sometimes deemed physical abuse.

In most cases [5/7] the terms 'strict' and/or 'religious' were connected to descriptions of physical punishment. Pansy described her family as "a violent family" where both her father and mother used physical chastisement. She talked about how she went to live with her grandmother for care and protection as her father assaulted her, and of how she had once attacked her mother when her mother used the strap on her. This, Pansy linked in with strong memories of her grandmother's religious influence, her own confusion, and a sense of betrayal arising out of her parents' violence and from being sexually molested by her grandfather. Daisy described a strict family regime that provided her with a very controlled sheltered life and she found the 'outside world' fascinating because of this upbringing. In

hindsight, she defined herself as the “black sheep of the family” who was always attracted towards the more rebellious types and therefore brought physical punishment upon herself. Freesia talked about not being a spoilt child, she “got the smacks,” and reported that she became quite rebellious; going through everything from running away from school, from home and so on.

Thistle said that her parents were “very strict because they were young and they knew what was out there.” She reflected on how they stopped her from doing what she wanted and if she disobeyed she knew that she would be grounded. Sometimes Thistle rebelled by staying out later than her curfew or by running away, and knowing that ‘a grounding’ was coming, she made the most of her freedom while she could. Daff had no fear of her parents, they operated from a religious base and although they were strict there was never any threat of violence. In fact, Daff said she could eventually get her own way with her parents, particularly her father, by playing up to their love for her. She relayed one of her fondest memories of childhood:

Um, gosh, getting what I wanted, when it happened. I remember when Beatle boots were all the rage and I wanted some. And I was told, “NO!” I was told that I didn’t want them. And I sulked, under the bed for a couple of hours and then I thought, “Nobody’s taking any notice”. So I came out. And I thought that I’ll get over it, but in about two weeks I did get some Beatle boots. They were wonderful! And even when they died I wouldn’t throw them out. They had big holes underneath but I still wouldn’t give them up. They were just the bees’ knees. Yeah, I guess I remember that the most and my father gave them to me. He was pretty good like that.

Fond memories, such as Daff’s, were few and far between for the women interviewed. For many, the happier memories of childhood were overshadowed by histories that were enveloped in trauma associated with domestic violence and abuse, and/or from the effects of childhood sexual abuse [see Table 2].

As noted earlier, Pansy reflected on her ‘violent family’, and the shame and embarrassment associated with this. On many occasions she saw her father assault her mother and she did not have any real understanding of these dynamics until she was older. Only then could she comprehend how her father had suffered knowing his wife was prostituting herself. “What my Mum put my Dad through!” Pansy reminisced. Making sense of her world was difficult; her

grandfather had molested her, her grandmother preferred to see the good in people and had reassured Pansy that God would take care of her and protect her. It was extremely confusing. Rose too found life lonely and confusing. Her father had once threatened her mother and siblings with a gun, another time it was a knife, on yet another he threw a lawn mower through Rose's bedroom window. He had smashed many windows in the house and Rose constantly worried about what he would do next. She remembered how once she and her brothers were upset and were screaming and yelling through fear. And she talked about how her mother's voice still echoes, "Shut up. I'm scared too!" Understandably, Rose started to cry when she relayed these memories.

Table 2: Participants' Acknowledgment of Parental Discipline Regimes, Domestic/Family Violence and Abuse, and Personal Experience of Sexual Abuse.

Participant	'Strict'/'Religious' with Loving Discipline	'Strict'/'Religious' with Discipline Bordering Abuse	Saw/Heard or Experienced Physical Violence & Abuse	Experienced Sexual Abuse – Under age 16
Pansy		✓ (Religious)	✓	✓
Jasmine	*	*	✓	✓
Daff	✓ (Strict/Religious)		No	*
Rose		✓ (Strict)	✓	*
Daisy		✓ (Strict)	*	*
Lily	*	*	✓	✓
Freesia		✓ (Strict)	✓	✓
Thistle	✓ (Strict)		✓	✓
Violet		✓ (Strict/Religious)	No	*
Rhodo	*		✓	No ♦

♦ But hauled out of the bath at the age of 14, causing emotional trauma & shame.

* Not mentioned.

Lily reflected on the domestic violence and her words express her feelings graphically:

Violence, yeah, and a lot of it was when they were drunk and um, they'd have parties at home, a lot of alcohol. There'd be a lot of violence and I hated it. You know, as soon as I'd hear, you know, that fighting and screaming, things like that. I'd run into my room and just bang myself up...[*silence*]. I'd block the door so nobody could get in and just sit there and cry. And that was mentally disturbing... Yeah, it was scary.

Rhodo, while not directly referring to domestic violence or sexual abuse, talked about arguments between her parents that made her feel sick inside. As she got older, the arguments got harder and harder to tolerate or understand, and in the end she no longer cared. Her worst

childhood memory centred on an incident where her sister wanted the bath and Rhodo, aged 14, wanted to stay in her bath. Her mother entered the bathroom and hauled Rhodo, naked, out of the bath so her sister could get in it. Rhodo reported shame, embarrassment, humiliation, anger and a range of confusing feelings surrounding this incident. "It was the most horrible feeling," she said.

As indicated earlier, Thistle reflected on her rebellious years around the age of 13, when she learned the truth about her father. She also revealed that around this time her "grandfather, well, not real grandfather by blood, had just died." But with a sudden shift in emphasis she said that this was a good thing as he had been "fucking around" with her. And at the age of 13, Thistle said that she was just beginning to understand fully that he had been sexually abusing her so it was an extremely emotional time. Jasmine also talked of experiencing sexual abuse before the age of 16, for which her mother, at that time, wore the blame.

Jasmine said that her mother had no real understanding of abuse and that she had left Jasmine, as a child, in some very unsafe situations. Jasmine reflected on being told to stay in a room with her uncle for the night, after he had helped her mother in a crisis situation in which Jasmine was scalded. Jasmine slept in the room so her uncle could keep a watch over her, making sure that she was all right after the accident. Instead, Jasmine said, he sexually abused her. She also said that her parents had a boarder who "did it to her all the time" and constantly made sexual passes. Confused and worried about her father's reaction if he found out, Jasmine kept these experiences to herself even though she knew that these men had done wrong. Jasmine reflected back on those days:

I didn't like the days. I didn't like the days. I used to wake up and think, "Oh, God it's Tuesday." Then sort of...the days for me, if I remember anything...I used to hate waking up. I just hated it. And there was no sense of warmth.... I thought, "Oh God, it's day and I hate the day." ...Yeah, when I was asleep, yeah, I felt that was my refuge. I had no sense of future, you know. I had no sense of tomorrow or next week or the day after. As far as I was concerned, I mean, I just had to get through the day.

It was not long before Jasmine left home. By the age of 17 she was surviving on the streets. "I suppose I was a 'street kid'," she said.

Freesia also struggled to make sense of her life. She lived in fear at home and was gang raped at the age of 13. She talked about her father “smacking her mother around” and of trying to stop it by phoning the police. Running away from home and shifting to another city provided relief from this trauma, but then her cousin, who belonged to a well-known gang, set her up for a gang rape and six other young men repeatedly raped her. Freesia, who was visibly distraught when talking about this experience, tried to explain how she felt and shared some strong emotional feelings; a sense of betrayal, being ashamed and of wanting to escape from it all.

While most women [9/10] indicated that their parents had support from extended family members, it became clear through the interviews that the women found little support to help them deal with the difficulties that they had endured during childhood. As illustrated in Table 3, six women indicated that there were times when they felt safer away from the family context. Responses ranged from spending hours at the beach or finding ways to avoid being at home, to running away or finding refuge on the streets.

Table 3: Participants’ Acknowledgment of Feeling Safer Away from her Family, Extended Family/Whanau Support, and Number of Years within Secondary School.

Participant	Felt Safer Away from Home	Extended Family/Whanau Support	Number of Years in Secondary School
Pansy	✓	✓	5 th Form
Jasmine	✓(Runaway)	✓	Not disclosed
Daff		✓	Part 5 th Form
Rose	✓(Go to Beach)		5 th Form
Daisy	✓(Runaway)	✓	Part 5 th Form
Lily		✓	Part 3 rd Form
Freesia	✓(On the Streets)	✓	4 th Form
Thistle	✓(Runaway)	✓	5 th Form
Violet		✓	4 th Form
Rhodo		✓	6 th Form

Impact of Home Life on Schooling.

Pansy, Lily, Freesia, Rose and Violet made direct connections between their home situation and their performance at school. Understandably, some lost interest, others found it difficult to stay focused, and some dropped out when they resorted to living on the streets. Others

struggled by the best they could. Rhodo, however, found school a place of sanctuary and she enjoyed the attention and security that the school offered. She explained:

I didn't want to be at home with Mum, I wanted to be with them [Rhodo's sisters]....
And I was a goodie-good at school. I was sort of a favourite, quite often, with the teachers.

She was the only woman interviewed who went past the 5th form. Daff enjoyed school too, but she began to take days off and eventually, at 15, refused to go to school at all. She talked about being a "bit wayward" at that stage. "I thought that I knew everything that I needed to know," she laughed. Daff would not compromise on the subject, even when her teachers came to see her parents and her at home. Finally her parents gave in and she left school completely.

Discussion.

Although the sample in this study is too small to make broad generalisations, it is interesting in an exploratory sense to note that some strong patterns in family backgrounds emerged. Nine out of the ten women interviewed reported some degree of family dysfunction. The problems discussed by the women, in terms of their own emphasis, tended to overshadow any general comment about socio-economic considerations. And although social class and ethnicity certainly influenced their experiences, and shaped their social reality, other experiences got greater prominence during the interviews. Clearly, personal dilemmas arising out of experiences related to parental drinking habits, parental marital or relationship breakdown, domestic violence and sexual abuse, because of their emotional and psychological impact, came through as more significant than demographic considerations. These experiences influenced the socialisation process that these women encountered, and before considering these events in relation to gang association, it is worth noting the emotional and psychological consequences and how they may impact on a person's life journey. In doing so, it is important to remember that these events do not occur in isolation; they are seldom stand-alone experiences within an otherwise normal family context. Rather, as Fergusson (1998, p.9.), indicates:

The psychosocial profiles of young people with adolescent difficulties suggests the presence of a large number of adverse factors centring around earlier social disadvantage, family dysfunction and personal characteristics that contribute to their later outcomes. It is clear...that exposure to CSA [child sexual abuse] is only

one of many factors that act in combination to determine an individual's longer-term vulnerability....

While child sexual abuse and exposure to interparental violence will be used here for illustrative purposes, other traumatic family dynamics are evident within the gang-related women's stories. Cumulatively, social and economic disadvantage, a broken home, parental absence, parental alcohol and drug problems, lax parenting, child neglect, harsh physical punishment, a family history of offending and so forth, can push a child towards a deviant lifestyle. These dynamics also are recognised as risk factors that support the adoption of, or an acceptance of deviance and antisocial behaviours (Fergusson, 1998, pp.6-9; Fergusson & Lynskey, 1997, pp.624, 627-629; Rutter, Giller & Hagell, 1998, pp.169-214; Somer, 1999, pp.449, 451-453).

Numerous writings have recorded the impact of child sexual abuse (see for example: Courtois, 1988, pp.89-117; Finkelhor, 1988, pp.61-82; Slater, 1988, pp.225-245; Furniss, 1991, pp.3-44) and there is no need to go into great detail here. In summation, the Traumagenic Dynamics Model of Child Sexual Abuse, a comprehensive and eclectic framework of child sexual abuse, recognises and outlines a number of different manifestations or responses to child sexual abuse along four traumagenic dynamics; "traumatic sexualization, betrayal, stigmatization, and powerlessness" (Finkelhor, 1988, p.68.). Each of these dimensions incorporates various dynamics of child sexual abuse and the related responses along psychological and behavioural lines (see Appendix VI). For example, psychological responses such as guilt, lowered self-esteem, depression, anger, mistrust, confusion about sexual norms and/or sexual identity, anxiety, fear, the perception of the self as a victim and so forth, are linked to behavioural manifestations such as: isolation, criminal involvement, delinquency, vulnerability to subsequent abuse and exploitation, running away, school problems and the like.

Recent research, utilising the traumagenic dynamic model, by Gold, Sinclair and Balge (1999, pp. 457-470) indicates that women who have experienced child sexual abuse are at a greater risk of sexual revictimisation as adults, particularly when other family dynamics may work to reduce any sense of support, cohesion, trust, belonging and connectedness within the family context. The attributes, beliefs and understandings made/held about the abuse and the strategy adopted to process the experience also work to determine the future outcome and risk factors.

Psychological theories of attachment indicate that child sexual abuse “is a violation that potentially presents serious damage to an individual’s sense of self” (Gold, Sinclair, Balge, 1999, p.462), which in turn influences interaction with others. Hyperfemininity, or a strong adherence to traditional or stereotypical gender roles, or a preference/attraction to ‘macho-type’ men may be one possible attachment outcome.

Hyperfeminine women are believed to have a tendency to comply with male images and expectations of sexual woman, and need a relationship with a male for reassurance of their self-worth and value. These women often have many sexual relationships in an attempt to find men who will care for and protect them. These tendencies render the women vulnerable to further revictimisation. Similarly, those women who adopt other insecure attachment styles and use avoidant, dependent, or self-defeating coping strategies may resort to drugs or alcohol, or enter many short term relationships attempting to gain intimacy without the anxiety of emotional commitment. These strategies are reported to increase the risk of sexual revictimisation and women who adopt these behaviours are said to be more likely to enter and stay in unhealthy relationships where physical, emotional and sexual abuse can re-occur (ibid, p.462).

Women who have experienced child sexual abuse and resort to drugs and/or alcohol as a means of coping are said to be prone to early and active sexual behaviours, and delinquency. And there is a strong connection between delinquency, frequent or heavy alcohol/drug use and sexual activity, with each of these behaviours working to reinforce and escalate the other (ibid, p.465). Continued involvement in these activities subsequently facilitates a greater tolerance for these and other forms of deviant behaviours, and therefore, further increases the risk of revictimisation. Social learning theories, however, offer different understandings about the responses or future outcomes of child sexual abuse.

Theories based on the social learning model posit that attitudes, beliefs, attributions and responses to, or around behaviour are learned through social experience. One such model focuses on the theory of *learned helplessness*, whereby victims are believed to learn to adopt the emotionally numb, self-blaming or defeating and passive responses that are often associated with abuse and revictimisation. It is thought that victims of abuse/violence learn to conceptualise, rationalise, or make sense of their experiences in accordance to the norms,

values, beliefs and attitudes, and behaviours promulgated within their particular social context.

Likewise, social learning theories propose that perpetrators of abuse; sexual, physical, and emotional, also learn these behaviours, as well as the associated rationalisations, beliefs and attitudes, in a similar fashion. Proponents of the *differential association* theory argue that criminal or antisocial behaviours are learned in the same way as non-criminal and socially accepted behaviours (Sutherland & Cressey, 1978 in Traub & Little, 1985, pp.176-182). Thus the behaviours, justifications, the minimising, denying and blaming tactics around sexual abuse are said to be learned through personal associations from within the perpetrators' environment, and these are reinforced by secondary associations like the media, movies, and pornography. Be it the victim or the perpetrator position, the cycle of abuse tends to replicate itself within generations and across generations (Carroll, 1977, p.298).

Exposure to domestic violence and abuse in childhood appears to be equally traumatic as child sexual abuse in terms of the impact. Depression, anxiety, confusion, fear, anger, feelings of rejection, isolation, feeling degraded and shamed, among other responses have been recognised. At an International Conference on Psychological Abuse of Children and Youth in 1983, the failure to shield children from such psychological maltreatment was considered to be destructive (Somer, 1999, p.450). Responses include delinquency, a leaning towards violence or victimisation, self blame and self harm, running away, difficulties with peer group relationships, suicidal thoughts, drug and alcohol dependency, parenting difficulties, criminal behaviour and so forth (Fergusson, 1998; Fergusson & Lynskey, 1997; Mullender & Morley, 1994, p.230; Owens & Straus, 1975; Rutter, Giller & Hagel, 1998; Steinmetz, 1997, pp.98-119).

The family is an important and extremely complex social institution, both as an agency of social control and a system of social support; however, the internal dynamics can provide both positive and negative learnings. Reviewing a range of literature in this area (see Fergusson, 1998; Fergusson & Lynskey, 1997; Haapasalo & Pokela, 1999; James, 1994; Mullender & Morley, 1994, p.230; Owens & Straus, 1975; Rutter, Giller & Hagel, 1998; Somer, 1999; Steinmetz, 1997, pp.98-119) it becomes clear that family context can provide a fertile ground for breeding children and adolescents who are vulnerable to violence, and criminality. This often occurs through experiencing abuse, witnessing and hearing abuse,

violence and criminal behaviours in action, and through negotiating an existence within cultures of violence, abuse, neglect and/or criminality. A study among abused girls carried out by Lewis et al (1991, in Haapasalo & Pokela, 1999, p.115) found that abused girls who subsequently got involved in criminal activity were often:

...plagued by suicidal thoughts, alcohol and drug dependency, got easily involved in violent relationships, and could not take care of their children. Almost half [48% of the girls interviewed] were sexually abused, while the prevalence of sexual abuse in the general population is about 12%.

Bearing this in mind gang involvement may be another coping mechanism and a response to previous experiences. And as one mother has asked:

If kids reach out for help, but nobody's there to help them...when they find an adult...and look at them as an authority figure or someone that's all grown up and is supposed to help you...and you're supposed to be able to turn to an adult and ask the adult anything...and they don't do it for you-where are they supposed to turn, what are they supposed to do?

(Elizabeth, a mother of two-a past victim of woman abuse, cited in Mullender & Morley, 1994, p.236)

Ineffective parenting and the failure to provide supportive, caring and safe environments often leave children in a position of isolation and alienation. Adolescence is a particularly stressful stage of life when young people struggle to establish their own identity and place in the world. They strive for independence and slowly break down the barriers of parental control. Peer group associations generally provide the mechanisms through which adolescents can achieve independence, while a strong nurturing family provides a safe and supportive backstop. Using the 'birds of a feather flock together' analogy, it makes sense that the vulnerable adolescent, feeling alienated from her/his family, will search for that supportive backstop elsewhere. This may be where the gang cultures become attractive alternatives to the family/whanau.

International data emerging from recent research on women's involvement in gangs tend to acknowledge that the gang structures have become mechanisms or "an idealized collective solution" (Campbell, 1990 cited in Miller, 1998b, p.1) through which complex and sometimes traumatic life problems can be negotiated. These problems emerge against a backdrop of social inequality and class, race or ethnic, and gender marginalisation. Cunningham (1994,

pp.91-102) argues that the females most at risk of gang associations and membership are those that come from:

...homes in crisis; homes which contain elements of marital discord, are headed by a single parent, where alcohol and drug abuse are prevalent and where physical violence, and or sexual abuse exist, as well as homes in which a sibling or parental gang involvement are a part of life.

(Cunningham, 1994, p. 2 of 6)

More recent research by Ferreira-Pinto, Ramos and Mata (1997, p.107), who explored the backgrounds of with 36 women, most of whom reported gang associations, found that:

...all of their women's present relationships involved intimate partner violence, and that they had been subjected to some form of physical or sexual abuse while they were growing up.

These women, Ferreira-Pinto et al claim, were attracted to males whom the women felt would not be challenged by those that they perceived as dangerous and violent. The 'macho' type male was seen as a form of protection that enabled these women to gain a sense of freedom from the abuse and struggles of their past.

Research carried out by Thompson and Braaten-Antrim (1998) examined whether physical and sexual maltreatment during childhood had implications in terms of gang involvement. Their findings suggest that:

...being maltreated increases the probability of gang involvement, independent of demographic factors.

(Thompson & Braaten-Antrim, 1998, p.1 of 14)

And that:

Youth who are both physically and sexually abused are four times more likely to participate in a gang than youth who are not maltreated.

(ibid, p.9 of 14)

The dominant themes to emerge in this study support Thompson and Braaten-Antrim's argument that childhood maltreatment, especially childhood trauma relating to experiencing physical and sexual abuse, has a role in an adolescent's journey towards gang involvement.

Other adverse factors, as previously noted, also contribute to this eventual outcome as physical and sexual abuses seldom occur in isolation from other adverse factors. It becomes clear through the interviews that many of the women interviewed have presented background histories that left them 'vulnerable' or 'at risk' of gang membership. The women in this study reported similar perceptions, and in the next section consideration will be given to their personal reflections about their attraction and motivations towards gang association.

CHAPTER FIVE:

BECOMING INVOLVED WITH THE GANG.

Introduction.

From the gang-related women's stories it can be seen that the paths towards gang association are varied. Some paths are more difficult to negotiate, while others seem straightforward and logically progressive. The reflections presented tend to highlight a number of positions and motivations that merge towards the gang association outcome. In this section, I explore the women's initial connections with gangs through family and friendship networks, and the motivations that led to gang association. Personal reflections about the women's attraction to particular gang members are considered, as too are their perceptions and understandings of the gang/gang member being a source of protection, security, acceptance and belonging.

Initial Connections with Gangs.

Many of the women interviewed [9/10] knew people with gang connections before they became involved with a gang member or the gang themselves [see Table 1]. Three women, Lily, Freesia and Violet, talked about family members who were involved with gangs. For Lily gangs were just a fact of life; she had family members involved with one of New Zealand's well-established gangs and was accustomed to their presence. She said:

A lot of our family was with the [name of gang]. Yeah, a lot of my family is connected with them. My brother-in-law had joined up with the [name of gang] and I liked that life. Yeah, I started drinking and going out with the gangs before I actually started going out with one of them. And when I met this gang member, my family disowned me because, you know, he was a member of [name of a different well-established gang]. Yeah, ... so I was disowned.

Similarly, Violet had a brother in a well-established gang and Freesia had two cousins in another gang. Freesia talked about other family members who socialised with local gang members and that she thought that going to parties with them would be relatively safe. In all these cases family involvement with gang members was considered matter-of-fact, they were not necessarily frowned upon or considered as social outcasts. They were simply members of a gang. Many worked, had children and functioned like others within the communities that

these women encountered. And like other people, these gang members were accepted, gang associations or not.

Both Freesia and Violet had made connections with the local street kids or runaways in their area. And some of these groups are known to be feed-in channels to the more established gangs. As Violet said:

It started from my brother um; his was the [name of gang]. Like the gang was of support, family, friends, things like that. When I was 14 and I used to hang out on Main Street, you know, with the street kids and things like that. Most of them were [name of gang] supporters and so from there it went. I went to the pubs, and it got to the bikes and things like that, yeah. I was heading in that direction from 14, hanging out with the street kids, things like that, yeah.

Jasmine talked about having runaway from home several times and of living on the streets. At age 15 she ran away yet another time and ended up staying with the local gang that a friend had associated with. She reflected on meeting up with the gang:

Oh that was probably when I ran away from home and they [the gang] had this little place up on the main street. You know what I mean? I actually went and slept there. I'd met with this girlfriend and I'd run away from home. I was 15, I suppose, you know, like I remember the women more than the men. They [the women] looked like they had it all together. They looked like everything I wasn't. They had it all together. They were staunch. They had security, and they had their partners. You know ... when I didn't have any of that.

From these very beginnings, Jasmine fostered friendships and life long connections, some healthy and some otherwise. Eventually, she married a man who associated with these people.

Like Jasmine, Daff, Rose, Daisy, Thistle and Rhodo made links with gangs through their friends and acquaintances [see Table 1]. Daff met her partner through mutual friends. At that time he did not seem to be a 'full on' member and Daff did not realise the extent of his allegiance until much later. Over time, she got to know his comrades and saw photographic evidence of his involvement, as Daff explained:

I had seen some photos. They were disgusting! They weren't obscene, but they were gross. They were, there was he and some others. I'd got to know some of them by this time and they looked nothing like these idiots in the picture and it was taken down the main street of [name of city] and they had some molls on their arms. *And*

they were real molls! I couldn't believe it. Skirts up round their necks and yeah, one had a beehive, beehive hairdo, gross! They just looked like whores and I said to him, "Who are these molls?" And asked, "Were they whores?" He just sort of nodded to affirm that they were. Whether they were or not, I don't know, but they just looked like molls. They were not, in my opinion, the nice types of girl.

Daff talked about how her partner had spent time with her and how, for a short while, his loyalty was to her, but as they became more settled in their relationship, it became evident that his loyalty had gone back to the gang.

Table 1: Participants with Family, Friends and/or Street Kid Connections with Gangs Prior to their Gang Involvement.

Participant	Family/Friends with Gang Connections	Natural Progression from Runaway/Street Kid Position
Pansy	*	◇
Jasmine	✓Through Friends	✓(runaway)
Daff	✓Through Friends	◇
Rose	✓Through a Friends	◇
Daisy	✓Through a Friend	◇
Lily	✓Friends & Family	◇
Freesia	✓Friends & Family	✓(street Kid)
Thistle	✓Through Friends	◇
Violet	✓Family & Friends	✓(associated with street kids)
Rhodo	✓Through Friends	◇

◇ Not mentioned.

* No previous connections at all.

Rose started to socialise at a bikie gang's headquarters after she met her friend's two brothers who were patched members. Having a heavy crush on one of the brothers, and she went to parties at the clubrooms so she could be around him. Daisy came in contact with the gang through friends that she went to stay with. One of them, a patched gang member, arranged for a party, which other gang members from around the country attended. It was at this party that Daisy met her future gang member partner. Similarly, Rhodo was invited to gang parties through friends who had associations with the gang. These friends often socialised in the same hotels that the gang's members frequented. Thistle and her friend, Briar, talked about the gang headquarters being a place where there would always be a party.

Briar: You could go there all hours of the night to party up. They often had the coolest bands.

Thistle: If you have nothing else to do you could go there because you know the music is good and you can drink all night if you really want to [laugh]. And I suppose you can get your cheap drugs.

During the course of the interviews, eight out of the ten women reflected on the good parties that gangs tended to have [see Table 2]. Rhodo and Daisy also mentioned that the gangs had become known for easy access to drugs. Pansy was the only woman to state that she never had any previous connections or involvement with gangs or gang members. Her introduction to this way of life was via abduction and rape.

Attraction to Gangs or Gang Members.

Many [7/10] of the gang-related women acknowledged the rebel within themselves [see Table 2]. During the interviews Jasmine, Daisy, Lily, Freesia, Daff, Violet and Thistle stated that being involved with the gang merely fitted in with this part of their nature. As Daisy illustrated:

I think what appealed to me was that they were rebels also. They [gang members] were really rebellious. They didn't conform. They were a law unto themselves and um, that appealed to me. Um, I guess, at that time, the only things that I had done that my parents really didn't like were the drugs and the alcohol, running away and things like that. So with these sorts of people [gang members] that was an everyday sort of thing. The drugs, the alcohol, the rebellion, yeah, I was attracted to that.

While Rhodo did not make direct connections between her rebelliousness and gang involvement, she discussed rebellious periods in her life. Both Rhodo and Violet described this characteristic as a part of their make up. Violet illustrated her spirited rebelliousness by sharing a fond memory that she has of her father. She said:

Life was all right when we were allowed to be us, just who we wanted to be, yeah. And my Dad's favourite saying to me was, "You could be in a room full of millionaires and there would be one bikie and that's where we would find you, with him." I don't know how he saw that, but that's what it's been like for me. Not because of those words, but because that's how it's been.

Some women connected their rebellious and spirited natures to wanting a bit of fun, excitement or adventure in their lives. And the gangs, to some degree, appeared to have initially fulfilled this need. Eight out of ten women talked about the gangs in this light [see Table 2] and the following quotes enable the 'good times' image portrayed to be grasped.

Rhodo: For me, yeah, it was all a bit of a thrill really. I mean, I didn't really go along with the bikie thing.

Daisy: They invited us back to their pad ... and the more drunk ones said, "Yeap that sounds like a real blast."

Thistle: They (the gang) were always a curiosity.

Rose: ...and then, um, his bike, a Norton Commando. The thing that I really liked was the speed of it, you know. He did 112 miles per hour up this hill and I just loved it you know. Adventure, yeah. I did love his motorbike.

Lily: The excitement of it all, yeah, the excitement. I just got caught up in it all.

Violet: Going for a ride together, we have all been together, gone somewhere, no trouble. Everyone was happy, having fun, yeah.

Freesia: The buzz of it all. It was a buzz. We'd go boozing up here and there, and I'd jump on the back of a bike and go hard. Being on the back of a bike, the freedom, and the people, they were the in thing at the time.

As will be shown later, these images of adventure, fun and excitement that the gangs provided soon contrasted sharply with talk along themes of abuse, degradation, humiliation, shame, and isolation that were to become the reality for many of those interviewed. Along with the rebellious spirit and fun seeking behaviours, half of the women stated that they had a preference for the more rebellious, and strong or macho type males in their lives. Lily reflected on her search for her 'right kind of man' and said:

...it was a security thing for me. You know, ... ahhh, this tough fella who would look after me, and um, love me, what I never had when I was young.

Violet talked about her attraction towards gang members in terms of their strength.

They looked strong, I think. You know, they just looked strong.... And, when I first saw my partner, it was like, well any guy really, first up, was that they were a strong person.

And Jasmine articulated her need of a macho male in the following way:

Believe it or not, but I was brought up around gentle men. All muzzos, all out to lunch, you know. None of them liked sport, they liked playing music. They loved music.... And *I wanted a man*, you know, *a real man*. So I have a love of truck drivers [laugh]. You know, that sort of man. You know, *give me a man*. Christ, I actually grew up, you know, all of the guys that abused me weren't tough guys. They weren't rough diamonds and they weren't...[laugh]. I actually grew up wanting a rough diamond. ... I like men that sweat. God, I was sort of always looking for this type of guy, but they ain't no better.

Along a similar theme, Rhodo reflected on her search for a man who would love her. She said that she was always looking for someone to marry and that this was a "security thing". When Rhodo first saw her future gang member husband she thought that she would entice him into her life. She said:

I saw him sitting there [at the bar] and he looked like a little lost boy. And I, ah, thought that I'd go and talk to, you know, this tough bkie [laugh] and see what I could do [laugh].

The attraction towards strong, tough males was often linked with an intense need for protection and security. As noted earlier, family dysfunction has played a role in many of the women's lives and appears to be associated with these needs. Some women reflected on these themes and talked about the role of the gang in fulfilling a void in their lives.

Table 2: Personal Attractions towards the Gang or a Gang Member.

Participant	Appealed to the Rebel in Me	Attracted to the more rebellious/'Macho' male	'The Buzz'-Looked for adventure, excitement
Pansy			
Jasmine	✓	(Inspired by the women)	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>
Daff	✓		<input type="checkbox"/>
Rose			✓ <input type="checkbox"/>
Daisy	✓	✓	✓ <input type="checkbox"/> **
Lily	✓	✓	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>
Freesia	✓	✓	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>
Thistle	✓		✓ <input type="checkbox"/> **
Violet	✓	✓	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>
Rhodo	(Acknowledged her rebelliousness)	✓	✓ <input type="checkbox"/> **

☐ Talked about gang parties

** Talked about the gang providing easy access to drugs

Gangs: A Means of Protection, Security, Belonging and Acceptance.

Most of the women interviewed [9/10] mentioned gangs or gang members were an avenue through which a degree of protection and security could be maintained [see Table 3]. Eight spoke of the protection theme in relation to themselves while Thistle spoke of the gangs providing protection for others. She did, however, comment on feeling protected because she had known some of the gang members for a considerable time. These gang members would give her tips on who the troublemakers were, and pointed them out. And she described being looked after by one particular gang member, a friend, who had some power within the gang.

Daff felt safe with the gang because she had developed friendships with many of the members outside the gang context, and some had grown up in the community that she was brought up in. The respect that the gang members had for her husband also enabled her to feel safe at the clubrooms. Daff indicated, however, that she observed the 'rules' at the clubrooms so she did not unduly upset the gang members. Rose, reflected on the contradictory nature of the protection that she was offered. She described how she was initially protected by one man who later degraded her by wanting a 'blow job' in return for the security he had provided. Later in the interview, Rose said that her gang member boyfriend protected her. She said:

I mean, knowing when one of them was eyeing me up ... the other guys were eyeing me up, he would just look after me. Yeah, he tried to keep me away from all that stuff [rapes and abuse].

Rose also felt accepted by the gang to a degree. She expanded on this:

Yeah, I think the thing is that my self-esteem was so bloody low. It was terrible actually. I hated myself. I thought, this guy, I'll hang around with him. Yeah, I think it was an escape really, from my family. As far as that goes it was part of an acceptance thing. I mean, that's why people are involved with gangs anyway.

Freesia, because she was gang raped by members of her cousin's gang, felt safer with the members of a different gang. They offered her a degree of protection in some sense and she felt accepted by them. Having been gang raped, her self-esteem had plummeted, and she felt extremely isolated. As a consequence, she thought that she would not be accepted elsewhere. She said:

The isolation, I was really isolated. It's easy really, you were just one of them anyway. If you went to a particular pub or the pad, you were just in. I was just basically a part of them, accepted anyway. You just lived it. What they are, the relationship, the togetherness.... All gang people are like that. We're family, yeah. It's an individual thing really, but it comes from the bosom doesn't it? It's just the way it was. It's just the way it was.

Freesia tried to explain that she saw herself as a 'gang woman'. Similarly, she said that people outside the gang considered her as such, and this contributed to her sense of isolation when away from the gang scene. At that time of her life, she felt accepted within the 'bosom' or the core of her gang family.

Lily talked of protection and acceptance in a similar way. The gang was like a whanau to her and the family feeling; the sense of acceptance and belonging was reinforced when her own family rejected her because her gang attachment was not with the family's favoured gang. She spoke of the protection that she gained in the beginning, in this way:

I probably felt a bit of power too, just being with a gang member. Yeah, um, I don't know, yeah. It's like, you know, nobody can touch me, you know, nobody can touch me. 'You touch me, watch out!' sort of thing and that's where, I think, the security came in. Yeah, it was to do with that search for security from when I was young. ... Yeah, I felt security and had protection. Just having a carload turn up and maybe stay for the weekend. It would be like, "Don't muck around with that household, the [gang name] go over there", you know. "It's not a place you'd want to rip off."

This talk about acceptance and belonging filtered throughout most [9/10] of the interviews in some form or another [see Table 3]. Daff, Jasmine and Thistle tended to draw on other people's experiences while the some women used their own realities to illustrate these feelings. In some cases personal protection, security, and acceptance came through the gang member partner. For example, Rhodo explained that she never felt any animosity or ill feeling towards her, and that she had total protection because of her partner's position as Vice President, and that others, including gang members, were scared of him.

At other times, this protection was described in terms of protection from the strong arm of the law. Daisy reflected on this aspect in the following way:

Once you have entered [the gang], are accepted or belong, there is always somewhere to stay. It doesn't matter where you go in New Zealand; there is always,

yeah, whanau to stay with. Yeah, there has been a number of times when we have needed help or we have been on the run or we have been in trouble with the law and it's been easy to travel throughout New Zealand because there is always somewhere to go. And whenever something has happened, and my partner was away, they [other gang members], even those from other chapters, would come round and pick me and my kids up, take me around to their whanau's place or hide me away from the law or rival gangs and things like that.

As well as protecting Daisy from the law or rival gangs, the instances Daisy referred to support and reinforce the family/whanau atmosphere within the gang. She felt protected, accepted and felt as though she belonged. Daisy and her partner avoided police detection and the consequences of such for over a year, as a result of gang protection.

Two women, Jasmine and Violet discussed the theme of acceptance in relation to their ethnicity or cultural position. And while this talk did not dominate any of the interviews, the observations presented here provide insights that demonstrate that cultural practice has an impact that can facilitate gang involvement. In attempting to illustrate this, Violet talked about her son's struggles in this area and then shifted the focus to herself. Her son, a reasonably fair child, had denied his Maori or Rarotongan ancestry, as Violet explained:

And that hurts. I mean he's going through what I went through. They [Violet's children] know in their hearts that they are being judged by their colour.... Yeah, the funny thing was I could get accepted in this sort of crowd [gang scene], but to go up to those fancy sorts of pubs and I couldn't be accepted. Like I would be dressed up nice and things like that and.... Yet in most of the gang things, I was accepted.

Jasmine reflected on how her family had moved to the city and left their rural Maori lifestyle and supports behind. As highlighted in her story, this was a time of rapid social change for Maori and the process of urbanisation that enticed Maori to make the move to the city left many families struggling to 'make it' in the Pakeha/European sense. Young Maori often found themselves in a quandary with both parents out working and they often came together for mutual support. Jasmine's mother spent much time away from home working while her father, who found the social changes hard, was emotionally unavailable. He sought solace elsewhere, for example in his music. And Jasmine found that her peer group relationships provided a supportive backdrop. And Jasmine's peers, like some other groups at that time, were the forerunner to one of today's larger, more dominant gangs. Of the group she hung around with, she said:

If I look at the gang then and the gang now, the rules were different. Well, they were different, but they weren't. Like I mean, they didn't have knives, they didn't carry guns and they *didn't do drugs*. Well, it wasn't really a gang then. It was just like this group that sort of got together.

During the late 1960s, the gang Jasmine was involved with was just becoming known as a gang. For all intents and purposes, she described this group as merely a group of like-minded friends who got together to socialise and for support when the going got tough. They drank a bit, got into a few fistfights and generally caused a bit of havoc in the small township where she lived. As time moved on, this gang attracted many Maori members and supporters, many of whom, like Jasmine, had parents who had moved from their rural communities to the city. The gang soon became a support system for many of these youth, but not for all youth.

Pansy was the only woman who did not talk about feelings of belonging, acceptance, protection or security. The material offered by her during the interviews centred on being "gang property," and that she "was owned by them." As will be discussed later, her story presents her as a prisoner of the gang world.

Table 3: Participants who saw Gangs as a Means of Protection, Security, Acceptance and Sense of Belonging.

Participant	Gangs/Gang Members as Protection/Security	Gangs and a Sense of Acceptance	Gangs and a Sense of Belonging
Pansy	*	*	*
Jasmine	✓	□	□
Daff	✓	□	□
Rose	✓	✓	*
Daisy	✓	✓	✓
Lily	✓	✓	✓
Freesia	✓	✓	✓
Thistle	✓ □	✓	□
Violet	✓	✓	✓
Rhodo	✓	✓ (a cautious acceptance)	*

* No, or not disclosed along these lines.

□ Spoke of this in relation to others, and not the self, although they made it clear that they were accepted as a partner of a gang member/associate.

Discussion.

It comes as no surprise that many of the women interviewed made contact with gang members and gangs through family and friends. New Zealand's estimated resident population sits at around 3.8 million (Statistics New Zealand, 30 June 1999), which is relatively small in comparison to most countries and our gang members are spread the length and breadth of the nation. Most people, especially in the lower socio-economic areas, are aware of where gang houses are situated and many people know gang members and associates, or at least know someone who does (Gardiner, 1996, p.7). Gang members have, up until recently, been highly visible, openly displaying their patches or colours, and their existence in the community. Spergel (1995, p.90) argues that the known presence of neighbourhood gangs, or a relative in a gang are among the "risk factors that predispose a child or youth for entry into a gang" environment. In some respects, gang life in New Zealand has been normalised within some family contexts. Women with brothers, cousins or other relatives, or boyfriends in a gang usually become more closely involved through these known ties. These women have been socialised to accept the gang and gang members as just another part of New Zealand life. Understanding why and how women become entrenched within gang cultures is more complex. Individual motivations towards a deeper level of commitment to the gang culture are intertwined with other dynamics that may have been operating within the woman's life. Some women seek protection and security because of the family dynamics previously outlined. Others seek fun and adventure, and get hooked into the 'buzz' of it all.

The idea that the gang becomes a substitute family for males and females that come from dysfunctional family units is well documented in literature (see Chesney-Lind, Shelden, & Joe, 1996; Decker & Van Winkle, 1996; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995; Marsh, 1982; Molidor, 1996a, 1996b; Rutter, Giller & Hagell, 1998; Spergel, 1995). And while much of the data generated relate to male membership and association, similar data from research that focuses on women's involvement have emerged.

Bill Payne's book, *STAUNCH: Inside New Zealand's Gangs*, (1997), brings the concept of the gang as a substitute family to the fore, as various gang members were quoted:

I'm in the Mongrel Mob; they're my family.

This is the only place I can go, the only friends I really know.
Nomads to me are my family.

I was brought up by Black Power, it's a family, a whanau.

There's a closeness, something that you can't get anywhere else.

(Gang members cited in Payne, 1997, pp.9 & 31)

In the USA, gang-related women interviewed in Texas, also spoke of their gang family. For example, Molidor records:

My gang is my family; I'm accepted and I know I can always count on them.

My family [gang] makes me feel like I'm a somebody. When we're hanging, people respect me.

(Female Gangsters cited in Molidor, 1996a, p.254)

Decker and Van Winkle discuss the process of joining a gang as a course of action that evolves over time. They claim that this process operates along two distinct dimensions; the first being a string of "pulls" towards gang association and membership and the second being a sequence of "pushes" (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996, pp. 64-66) towards gang involvement.

One of the most powerful pushes towards gang association and membership appears to be the family that, for a variety of historical, social, cultural, and political reasons, may not be able to provide social, emotional and moral support and understanding. This leaves some adolescents vulnerable, needing to seek out avenues in which these needs can be fulfilled. Therefore:

The gang has become a "spontaneous"...social unit that fills a void left by families under stress. Parents and other family members are preoccupied with their own problems, and thus the ...group [gang] has arisen as a source of familial compensation.

(Vigil, 1988 cited in Spergel, 1995, p.94)

The need for protection or personal safety when the family has failed in this regard, or is the source of abuse, is another push towards gang association. When the family fosters a sense of internal powerlessness the gang family, as such, becomes a source of external power and provides the much-needed elements of protection (Molidor, 1996a, p.254). The support of a gang member partner and the friendships derived through gang associations, which are reinforced by the gang's solidarity, provided some of the women interviewed in this study with a means of resistance to violence and abuse, or a mechanism through which they could

stop abuse that had been occurring in their lives. The irony is, that the means employed to reject violence and abuse, and in this case, the gang/gang member, also tended to use tactics of violence and abuse, which frequently became a future area of concern.

Molidor (1996a, p.254) argues that the protection and power that women in gangs feel, enables them to experience a degree of respect from others, but also states that it is often acknowledged that this respect is based on fear. Similarly, some of the gang-related women interviewed in this study presented an overall picture that went like this:

Well my Dad, [or Grandad], who sexually abused me and beat up my mum and brother, and comes home drunk and well, he ain't gonna come near me when I'm with this big, strong gang member, 'cause he's got the whole gang behind him.

Some women, particularly Daisy, Rose, and Lily, entered the relationship with their gang member partner quickly, and did not expect their source of protection to become someone to fear. They believed their men would have understanding and would provide support, especially if they had come from families that did not offer such comforts. These women talked about their initially warm, caring and protective relationships sliding quickly into caverns of violence, abuse and despair. The characteristics that these women initially admired in men: the ability to be strong, to stand up to others, to fight and protect themselves and their mates, became the same characteristics that these women later despised because they soon became victims of their men's violence. Ferreira-Pinto et al (1997, p.114) found similar patterns when interviewing women associated with street gangs in Juarez, Mexico. The gang-related women that they interviewed sought men who offered "some form of protection from their families' chastisement, abuse and predation from a dangerous and violent community" (Ferreira-Pinto et al, 1997, p.113). They found that their men enabled them to achieve a sense of freedom from fear, and a degree of respect and status from those that they believed were more dangerous. Ferreira-Pinto et al claim that the rationale the women they interviewed used when negotiating intimate relationships, like the women interviewed in this study, "became a major source of disappointment in their lives." And the women soon feared their source of protection.

It must be remembered that gangs exist within a wider social environment that is riddled with social inequalities, with gender inequality and sexual exploitation being prominent

characteristic (Miller, 1998a, p.5 of 15). Male violence against women and children across society is supported through a system of beliefs and attitudes that is “grounded in structures of domination and control” (Kaufman, 1997, p.34) that give men certain rights and privileges over women. These beliefs maintain that women are inferior to men, that women are possessions of men and that men have a right to control women, and therefore children. Men engaged in stopping violence programmes often talk of their abusive actions in this regard and three prominent themes emerge. Violence and abuse are used to stop the women, or the child from doing something, to make them do something, or to punish them for doing something (Balzer, Haimona, Henare & Matchitt, 1997, p.29; Personal Knowledge). Women strategise or develop patterns of accommodation and/or resistance within the wider social context, within their families and relationships to maximise their security and in their attempts to reduce the threat of harm on physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual levels (Fishman, 1987, p.177; Kandiyoti, 1988, p.274). Seeking protection through gang connections becomes merely an option, perhaps a rather idealistic one, to escape violence and abuse.

Social learning theories suggest that the women’s environments inevitably influence the strategies that women adopt. Thus, beliefs and attitudes promulgated in violence-prone families would manifest themselves in the choices that these women make in their lives (Thompson & Braaten-Antrim, 1998, p.10 of 14). The need to seek out a strong, tough, rough diamond for protection, as highlighted by the women in this study, is grounded in traditional beliefs where ‘good’ men are meant to provide and protect the weaker gender. The problem is that some men find it difficult to differentiate between protection and control. Through the internalization of patriarchal values, women also assist the maintenance of beliefs that oppress them and in this way they are placed, or are forced into, a position whereby they contribute to their own abused position or are blamed for the abuse they endure (Kandiyoti, 1988, p.285; Miller, 1998b, pp.26-28).

Unfortunately, in terms of gender inequalities, gangs are mere mirror reflections of the wider social context. Gang members employ similar norms and values, similar tactics of power and control over women, and use similar rationalisations and justifications to maintain their position, as some non-gang men. These gender inequalities, however, appear to be replicated in a more concentrated form within the gang and criminal contexts. Therefore, it becomes more likely that the relationships these women enter will become like mirror images of what

they hoped to leave behind. Similar contradictions occur when women seeking adventure, excitement and fun are drawn towards gang involvement.

One of the stronger 'pulls' towards gang association highlighted in the women's stories centres around friendship, adventure, fun and excitement. Gangs have acquired an aura of mystique and intrigue. And traditional notions, or myths about gang life have presented the women involved as either "maladjusted violent tomboys" (Chesney-Lind, Shelden & Joe, 1996, p, 200) or as "sex objects" (Hopper & Moore, 1990, p.366) who enjoy the wild gang parties and therefore, are presumed to deserve the 'bad girl' labels - sluts, whores, molls – that are applied. Throughout the early literature the picture of thrill seeking women, passive and possibly corrupted by sex, were seen as "fallen women" (Campbell, 1984, p.28) who had slipped into the underworld of gangs and/or crime. These earlier assumptions about the gang women seem to be more fictional when compared to the reality exposed through research that takes into account gang-related women's views and perceptions.

For the biker woman, fun and excitement revolves around the world of motorcycles. Hopper and Moore note that conversations with biker women revealed that the some of the women simply loved and were excited by motorcycles and they quote:

Motorcycles have always turned me on.... There's nothing like feeling the wind on your titties. Nothing's as exciting as riding a motorcycle.
(Cathy cited in Hopper & Moore, 1990, p.375)

In this study Rose and Freesia offered similar explanations, they enjoyed being on the back of a bike and the sense of adventure and freedom that riding a big bike brings. The notion of freedom often ties in with the rebellious spirit. Hopper and Moore believed that "it was the disarming boldness of bikers that attracted many women" (ibid, p.377). One woman they interviewed claimed:

I was rebellious as long as I can remember. It's not that I hated my folks.... But I just never could be the way I was expected to be.... I've always liked my men rough. I don't mean I like to be beat up, but a real man. Bikers are like cowboys; I classify them together. Freedom and strength I guess are what it takes for me.
(ibid, p.377)

For some women, gang life provides opportunities for fun, a distraction from boredom and/or the depressing prospects that await some life positions. Campbell (1990 in Chesney-Lind, 1993, p.333) noted that women involved in the Hispanic street gangs of New York had bleak futures awaiting them. Gang involvement offered a sense of excitement or an escape from such drudgery. Campbell also found that the lack of recreational facilities, long days and hours milling around without work or the structure of school in some women's lives promoted talk that was "filled with exaggerated stories" (Chesney-Lind, 1993, p.333) that idealised and added glamour to the women's everyday existence. In this sense, gang life provided women with a means, or skills that help them survive within their particular social environments. Similar scenarios appear within the gang-related women's stories interviewed here, particularly when home life was bleak and generated little positive in the way of future prospects.

On a slightly different level, Spergel notes that much of an adolescent's attraction towards gang life is merely about having fun, enjoying the company of, and interaction with similar types of people. The negative aspects of gang life, alcohol, drugs, intimidation and/or criminal activity widely recognised and facilitated through group dynamics are not recognised by the adolescent at the time. He suggests that acts of delinquency and aggression may be "secondary to the anticipated excitement and satisfaction of interacting with peers of similar backgrounds" (Spergel, 1995, p.93). As time proceeds, however, the parties, alcohol and drugs, freewheeling life on motorcycles, or hanging around takes on a more insidious tone. Suspicion, paranoia, looking over one's shoulder for that unsuspecting rival gang member or associate, or the police, and being always on guard for your own safety causes ever increasing tension and an underlying fear slowly deglamorizes the mystery, excitement or fun that the gang life originally fostered. For some, it is easier to attempt to rekindle the fun and excitement. For others, like the women interviewed here, the facade that gang life provides breaks down and the absurdity of gang life becomes obviously clear as the good times become rare.

By the time women realise what they have got immersed in, they have become socialised within the gang culture and find that getting away from the gang is not easy. As will be highlighted ahead, many became further alienated and isolated from the wider social context. They were now seen as 'gang women' with all the negative connotations of such a label.

CHAPTER SIX:

LEARNING THE RULES & THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND'S GANGS.

Introduction.

All cultures, including gang cultures, have their own perceptions and ideas about appropriate forms of behaviour (Meyers, 1988, p.186; Robertson, 1989, pp.29-32, 95). And joining any group, deviant or otherwise, such as an organisation, institution, club, a new job, a new religion, a cult or a gang involves an orientation period where newcomers learn the social norms or 'the way things are done' within that group/culture. During this time a process occurs which facilitates an understanding of the group's norms and rules, both the spoken and unspoken kind, that operate within the group. Individuals also come to understand the various roles played within the group and expectations around those roles, and they learn about the consequences of breaching the commonly understood norms. Sometimes these understandings are gained through overt processes, at other times subtle or covert practices get the message across to the newcomer. Furthermore, a system of rewards and punishments works to reinforce the understandings through which the group operates. In this way people are socialised into the institution or to the group, and as time goes on people internalise these norms and use them to guide their own decisions and behaviour (Spear, Penrod, & Baker, 1988, p.819; Robertson, 1989, p.85). The purpose of this section is to explore the role and place of women within the gang culture, and to gain an understanding of the socialisation processes and the group norms that operate to sustain that role.

The Place of Women in International Gangs.

As indicated thus far, the role or place of women within gang cultures is marginal and indeed, a risky place to be. Having been negatively stereotyped into two broad categories, some female gang members and associates have become seen as sex objects; 'sluts' or 'whores' who willingly spread their sexual selves far and wide within the gang context, or who succumb to the will of the male members. Others have been labelled 'tomboys', and have been described as marginal attachments to the males, who play a secondary role, which is both submissive and supportive to the male role. To a large extent this image still holds today, in spite of more recent research data that indicates that the role of women in gangs is

somewhat more complex than these male defined classifications imply (Campbell, 1984; p.28; Decker & Van Winkle, 1996; p.18-19; Hopper & Moore, 1990, pp.363-365; Molidor, 1996a, p.251).

Hopper and Moore (1990), for example, researched women's involvement in outlaw motorcycle gangs over a 17-year time span. And having collected data through participant observation and interviews with biker women and motorcycle gang members in Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana and Arkansas, they found that the place of women within biker gangs was variable. They noted that while all women were generally treated as being "inferior to all men" and "were completely dominated and controlled by men" (Hopper & Moore, 1990, p.383), some women were treated better than others and were able to rise to varying degrees of power within their clubs. Moreover, Hopper and Moore argue that the biker women presented a "double jeopardy" (ibid, p.384). Most of the women Hopper and Moore interviewed had come from difficult backgrounds that offered little in the way of future prospects. With bleak futures awaiting them they sought freedom and security in illicit or deviant contexts, only to find that they were subjected to further abuse, exploitation and subjugation. Hopper and Moore argue that:

It is ironic that biker women considered themselves free while they were under the domination of the biker. They had the illusion of freedom because they lived with men who were bold and unrestrained. ... Biker women thus illustrate the pervasive power of socialization and the difficulty of changing deeply ingrained views of the relations between the sexes inculcated in their family. They believed that they should be submissive to men because they were taught that males were dominant.

(Hopper & Moore, 1990, p.384)

Thus Hopper and Moore argue that the families of origin provided the foundations, or beliefs and attitudes that rendered these women susceptible to the gang's socialisation processes. Having internalised traditional beliefs and attitudes about women's role in the family and society, these biker women believed that they were inferior to men. The women interviewed by Hopper and Moore presented arguments that conveyed that it was their duty as women to "obey and honor" (ibid, p.378) their men and that they wanted, or needed strong men to keep them in line. In believing that they were inferior or that they needed straightening out these women became vulnerable to contribute to the maintenance of the traditional gender role

stereotypes and the associated expectations that ultimately support the abuse and subjugation of women. And:

Although they had rebelled against the strictures of straight society, their orientation in gender roles made them align with outlaw bikers, the epitome of macho men. (ibid, p.384)

The assertion that the role or place of women within gang contexts is *variable* and that their position is *contradictory*, as implied by the ‘double jeopardy’ image presented by Hopper and Moore, is well supported by other researchers in this area. JoeLaider and Hunt (1997, pp.148-169), who completed an ethnographic study of seven ethnic gangs in San Francisco during 1991 and 1992, and carried out interviews with 65 female gang members, also note the variable and contradictory position of the gang women. They reported that the women interviewed in auxiliary girl gangs, while being controlled by their male counterparts, described themselves as “separate but together” or as being independent and a “distinct entity” (ibid, p.156) from their male gang members. These women also tended to define themselves in relation to their male counterparts who sought to ensure that their women maintained a traditional female role. Furthermore, JoeLaidler and Hunt (ibid, pp.160-166) note that while these women disliked and at times reacted against this male control and indeed, violence, they were also involved in behaviours, such as gossip, fights and hassles over their men, and violence against *other* women¹. These actions contributed to the overall control of women in these gang contexts. Such control was particularly noted around women’s sexual behaviours as the need for women to maintain a “good reputation” (ibid, p.161) within gang contexts had been exemplified.

Similarly, Anne Campbell (1987, pp.451-466) who observed three New York female gangs between 1979 and 1981 found that serial monogamy was the preferred norm within these particular gang contexts. While the public had a general perception that gang women were sexually promiscuous, her findings demonstrated that not only did male partners criticise and abuse women for sexual promiscuity, the gang women she studied also “exerted a good deal

¹ It needs to be noted that the terms ‘*other* women’, ‘dirty girls’, and ‘bad girls’ have been used here to refer to women connected to gangs that are *not* partners of male gang members and who generally behave in a promiscuous manner. These *other* women are more often than not, not trusted by partners of gang members. And a partners of gang members can also be viewed under these categorisations, especially if they end their relationship with a gang member and become a threat to the relationships of other partners of gang members.

of social control over one another's sexual behavior" (ibid, p.461). Women/girls who were unaware of the gangs' contextual norms and who had sexual contact with many men were "called to account for their behavior" (ibid, p.461) by the longer serving females. And those who breached the norms were often denigrated through negative gossip and the application of pejorative labels such as 'slut' and 'whore'. This activity, Campbell argued, was in part to protect the female members' relationships with their individual gang member boyfriends, and to alert the new female member to "the danger of losing male respect" (ibid, p.461). Thus the female gang member finds herself in a contradictory and vulnerable position in which she attempts to maintain her sense integrity or a worthy sense of self. To do this, like women in other sectors of society, she criticises other women's behaviours that are deemed objectionable and distances herself from those particular behaviours. Not only were these women actively constructing a social identity through the rejection of negative personal attributes (ibid, p.454), they were also conforming to, and contributing to the maintenance of the socially constructed norms around gender within the gang context, and the wider social environment.

Miller (1998b) interviewed a total of 48 female gang members in St.Louis, Missouri and Columbus, Ohio in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the complex world of gang-related women and the contradictory position that shapes their lives within the gangs. In doing so, Miller drew on Kandiyoti's concept of *patriarchal bargains* to aid her analysis. Kandiyoti (1988) argues:

That women strategize within a set of concrete constraints that reveal and define the blueprint of what I will term the *patriarchal bargain* of any given society, which may exhibit variations according to class, caste, and ethnicity. These patriarchal bargains exert a powerful influence on the shaping of women's gendered subjectivity and determine the nature of ideology in different contexts. They also influence both the potential for and specific forms of women's active or passive resistance in the face of their oppression.

(Kandiyoti, 1998, p.275)

Kandiyoti further defined the term *patriarchal bargain* as code of practice or set of rules that regulates gender relations. This is a code to "which both genders accommodate and acquiesce, yet which may nonetheless be contested, redefined, and renegotiated" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p.286), bearing in mind that generally women "bargain from a weaker position" (ibid, p.286). Thus it is within different gendered structures or institutions that women adopt differing

strategies or patriarchal bargains to increase their sense of security and to maximise their life chances or options (Kandiyoti, 1988, p.274; Miller, 1998b, p.6).

Within the gang context, Miller found that the girls or female gang members that she interviewed reported a sense of power and equality with their male counterparts while they also acknowledged experiencing the powerlessness of being bound within a male dominated system. Furthermore, these women were actively supporting and accepting of the entrenched gender inequalities that existed within their particular gangs. Miller argued that the strategies or patriarchal bargains adopted by the girls/women within the gang contexts worked to create and maintain a “rigid dichotomy” (Miller, 1998b, p.21) between the ‘good girls’ and the ‘bad girls’, referred to as “ ‘ho’s’ [whores] and ‘wrecks’ ” (ibid, p.21) in these particular gang contexts. This dichotomy, Miller claimed, enabled the ‘good girls’ to conclude that they were treated differently from the *other* women, and thus they were able to see themselves as “one of the boys” (ibid, p.22).

When these *other* women were ridiculed, abused, degraded or sexually exploited by the men, the girls/women with gang member partners also got involved in denigrating these *other* women and avoided focusing the responsibility for the mistreatment of women on their males. This process of shifting the blame for the mistreatment of women by gang members onto the *other* women is one of many strategies that enable, and provide a means with which, partners of gang members can carve themselves a normative space, or create a relatively safe position, although narrowly defined and limited, in a dangerous environment. These strategies then provide the women concerned with a “means of empowerment and self-definition not available in other contexts” (Miller, 1998b, p.20), and allows partners of gang members to distance themselves, to a degree, from the practices that vilify these *other* women.

These strategies or patriarchal bargains do not occur without negative costs. Gang girls/women who participate in these strategies become silenced in the process. As one of Miller’s participants stated:

At first, when I first ever started listening to them talk, it made me mad and I would jump in and say my little piece. And my brother [also a member] would look at me, “are you going to sit here and join the conversation or just butt in when you get mad?” So I just learned to just sit back and just keep mine to myself.

(Monica cited in Miller, 1998b, p.22)

As Miller further explained, Monica had to join in and play the game; fit in with the rules of the game, for if she challenged them she would find herself alienated from her group. But in accepting the situation and the mistreatment of these *other* women and women overall, she “risked self-alienation” (Miller, 1998b, p.22). Kandiyoti reminds us, that these strategies are not uncommon outside the gang context. Many women employ similar strategies or patriarchal bargains and the restrictions imposed on them are often considered a “small price that had to be paid in exchange for security, stability and presumed respect” (Kandiyoti, 1988, p.283) that are supposed to emerge from the social order in which they exist.

Sexism in Criminal and Gang Cultures.

Many gangs come under, and are associated with a broader, subcultural classification: criminal culture. And it is known that women in criminal cultures, like gang cultures tend to accept the role of ‘traditional’ women and that they adopt various coping strategies or accommodations that serve to “normalize” (Fishman, 1987, p.201) their male partners’ behaviours and in particular, their criminal activities. Criminal cultures are deeply embedded within traditional patriarchal values and practices that have dominated much of our social history. Newbold (1989, p.265) argues that:

In New Zealand, as overseas, the place of women is peripheral, and much of the criminals’ code of honour is related to traditional concepts of manliness. ... As in the community at large, criminal culture is a male-dominant one in which women are supposed to remain passive and subservient.

Having explored the issue of institutional sexism in the underworld, Steffensmeier and Terry (1986, pp.305-323) found that the male criminal fraternity held five major beliefs about women that shaped women’s lives and inevitably limited their involvement in certain aspects of the criminal world. Although there are many exceptions and qualifications that may be noted, these beliefs are tied in with the traditional gender roles and expectations. It is these beliefs and attitudes that the women above attempted to counter with their strategies or patriarchal bargains. Many males in Steffensmeier and Terry’s study reported that they believed women were physically weaker than men, and this limited the type of crimes that women could be involved in. They argued that women were more emotional than men are and as such, did not have enough emotional endurance to carry out criminal activity as men would. Specifically, women were easily frightened, they were unpredictable, unstable, and they tended to act without thinking things through properly. Many of the men interviewed did

not believe women were trustworthy enough to deal in this area. After all, women had a tendency to breakdown under pressure, and these men believed that women would be more inclined to gossip about criminal activity or, even worse, nark to the authorities. Furthermore, women just did not have the “guts or courage” (ibid, p.313) to deal with the stress and tension in a practical sense. Overall, these men were chivalrous with strong views that women should not commit crime. This was deemed men’s work, outside the women’s role. After all, as one man argued, a woman’s place is in the bedroom or the kitchen (ibid, p.314). Bearing in mind the all pervasiveness of such beliefs within the criminal spheres, it is understandable that men from gang cultures in New Zealand have revealed similar beliefs and attitudes about women.

Women in New Zealand Gangs: The Men’s View.

Data on New Zealand gang cultures indicate that notions about women’s behaviour are aligned with traditional gender roles and expectations, which determine the ‘good girl’ versus ‘bad girl’ categorisations, and influence how women are treated within the gang context. In supplementary interviews for this study, former male gang associates stated that:

Harris: Women are bitches, they had no status, were there to cook and clean, to make beds and so on. To breed kids! Many had major drug and alcohol problems. Some were street workers. Many came from similar dysfunctional family backgrounds as the men.

Tane: They [women] are like servants. It’s like in the whole gang scene that I observed; it was like women didn’t really play a role other than minding the kids, um. It’s a life of servitude.

These views support the findings of Marsh (1982 pp.77-82), interviewed gang members in two of New Zealand’s penal institutions. He found that 29 of the 30 Mongrel Mob and Black Power members interviewed believed that “women could not become members or hold office in their gangs” (Marsh, 1982, p.78.). Women were often described as “scrubbers” or “blocks” (ibid, p.77), with their prime destination in life being in the kitchen or in the bedroom. It was argued that women just did not have the strength or stamina, physically and emotionally, that it takes to be a gang member. And many of the men believed that gang life was too difficult for women to handle. Thirty-three per cent of those interviewed claimed that “women were treated violently if they misbehaved” (ibid, p.79.), while 60 per cent felt that the women were “reasonably treated” as long as they did what they were told. If not, they got “a boot up the

arse” (ibid, p.79.). The treatment of women within these gangs was rationalised in the following ways:

...the women knew the rules; they wanted to be with the gang and they expected violent treatment.

That’s just how it is, if they want to be with the mob they must want to be treated like shit, because all the mob treat them like shit.

(Gang members cited in Marsh, 1982, p.80)

Some participants in Marsh’s study acknowledged that some women were treated differently, and were “special” (ibid, p.79). This differentiation amongst gang women was determined through the status of a particular woman’s partner or her connections in the gang, and her ability to gain some respect. In Payne’s book, *STAUNCH: Inside New Zealand’s Gangs* (1997), a number of quotes highlight that any differential treatment of women was bound by chauvinistic attitudes, for example:

Black Power: We don’t allow women to be one of the brothers. They are women and we treat them as women, not men.

Prospect: Women are just the cleaning piece, the tool, otherwise they are not of great importance.

Bikers: Women don’t have any say in the running of our affairs. We are a total male chauvinist society.

Mongrel Mob: Women have no place in the Mob; just make the bed and cook the breakfast.

(Quotes cited in Payne, 1997, pp. 38-40)

Erin Eggleston (1997, pp. 101-114) explored gender issues with 43 male gang members. She found that girls could participate in the gang scene as girlfriends of members, not as members. There was some suggestion that respectable girls would not hang out with the gang, and the members would interact with respectable girlfriends away from the gang context. Girls who hung around with the gang were known as ‘bitches’ and ‘ho’s’ and were generally treated with disrespect. As one gang member said:

... we see a chick and then awe yeah we’ll pick her up and if she wants to come for a drink with us and after a while that’s us, we’re in her and then the next day we dump

her and then awe we go and find another one.

(Gang member cited in Eggleston, 1997, p.106)

Although the gang was portrayed as a male domain and not the preferred place for women, the gang members claimed that they “looked after” (Eggleston, 1997, p.108) their women, especially those who were pregnant, as associates or supporters of the gang. This, Eggleston argues, enables the men to construct themselves as “responsible and charitable” (ibid, p.108) men and thus the gang can be perceived as a safe place where women are offered a degree of protection. Furthermore, Eggleston noted that the men’s degradation of women through ‘boy’s talk’, and the representation of girls/women in gangs as ‘bitches’ or ‘ho’s’, worked to strengthen the ‘maleness’ of the gang. This degrading terminology facilitated the overall control of girls/women, and those who did not obey the rules or stay within their assigned role lost the support of the males and could be forced into a sexual role, were they are conceptualised as “rootbags” (ibid, p.111).

At this point it would be unfair not to mention that some men, and women for that matter, have tried to work for change in this area. Many gangs, - for example, Black Power, some chapters of the Mongrel Mob and Highway 61 - have made statements, sometimes publicly, about outlawing gang rape or acknowledging that domestic violence and/or the general treatment of women is problematic (personal knowledge; *Press*, 8 June, 1998; Tam, 1999; Wane, 1991, p.15-18). It is questionable, however, as to how influential individual people, groups of people, or chapters are in promoting gender equality and respect of women within chapters, across chapters or nationally. Not surprisingly, the women interviewed for the current study queried how the practices that have been outlawed are actually defined, and they were sceptical about how outlawed behaviours are monitored or policed within the gang contexts. So, what did the women interviewed say about their role or place within the New Zealand gang contexts?

Women in New Zealand Gangs: The Women’s View.

At this point, the women’s own narratives convey deeper meaning and understanding of their position and place within gangs. And as will be seen, some women had a difficult time when learning the rules and in coming to understand their position in the gang. As Daisy’s story shows:

I didn't understand at all, the rules, the laws, the culture, anything like that and it was really, ah... I think I was frowned upon [laughs], yeah. Um, they found me ... stuck up. I mean where I came from I thought that girls wear dresses, and make-up and high heel shoes and that sort of thing. And that wasn't really the buzz at all with any of those [gang] women. I thought being friendly and sociable was a good thing. Where I came from that was totally acceptable, and it wasn't at all acceptable to just go up and talk to gang members or to offer them a ride, or to offer them cigarettes. Um, or to take offers of a ride, cigarettes or drinks or anything whatsoever. So they thought that I was stuck up and then I was probably being termed a "real slut" in their eyes. And I was quite unaware of that until I was, um, I sort of had the girls gang up on me. Whenever I would go to the toilets, or sort of when my partner wasn't around, or if my other friend wasn't around, then it sort of became obvious that these girls didn't like me at all. And I was going to have to change my ways real fast and learn the rules, and learn what was accepted or have a real hard time, mmm.

You know one of them [a gang member] didn't like the way I had my hair and um, he just came up and chopped my hair off. It was tied back in a ponytail with a scarf and he just chopped it off. Another one came up and you know, "What's that shit all over your face?" Because, you know, I was wearing make-up, and he got a can of beer and sort of shook it up and sprayed it into my face. You know, they definitely have more respect for ah, friends and family of the boys than just ah, um you know, some chick that they don't know, who could be just a dirty girl. You know, until they realised that I was actually somebody's partner.

I was out the back of the pad and they had just finished a meeting. And the Prez came up and was saying, "Who are you girl?" And stuff like that and he grabbed me. He just drew out a knife and sort of stuck it to my back and he says, "Have you got a problem? Why aren't you talking?" I didn't want to talk to this guy 'cause, you know he was really harassing and threatening me. So I thought that I would just shut my mouth and that I'd be okay, but he wanted an answer. He started to jab the knife in my back and um, was carrying on. I turned to my partner and said, "I'm not taking this shit. I'm outta here." You know, "You can shove it!" And I stamped out in front of everybody, sort of making a big scene, you know. And that was the first time that he [Daisy's partner] actually hit me. And that was because I showed a total lack of respect for him in front of the others and it was his duty to turn around and do me in front of everybody, so that he could show that he had the upper hand.

Um, and from there, ah sorry, he did actually beat me in front of the guys and then he took me into a room and told me that the reason he had to do it was that there were rules and regulations and things and that he was sorry. He said he didn't mean to do it, but that he had to in front of the guys otherwise it would just make him look weak. So he told me that there were going to be certain things that I was going to need to learn as we were going along, and that he was going to have to teach me some of those things.

Rule number one was that you don't put another guy down and you don't call them certain names. You don't look at them. You don't speak to them unless you are spoken to and you do not go anywhere alone with any one of them. You don't hop

in cars. You don't accept anything from anyone. The girls [partners as opposed to dirty girls] sit at one table and they talk to each other. They do not talk to anyone else. Um, you just stick with the girls and hopefully they would show me, you know they would teach me how to behave, yeah and how to be accepted by the guys and by the other women. Mmm, I don't think they ever really accepted me as one of them, there was always something that I couldn't relate to ... and that's why I did get so many beatings.

Daisy's story illustrates how it was for many of the gang-related women. Slowly but surely they learned their lessons and came to conform to the gang culture. She also commented:

It's really the women that keep it all together at the end of the day, for the guys. They rely on them a lot. It's not just the cooking, the cleaning and the bringing up of the kids and things like that. They rely on women a lot for um, alibis. In the particular gang that we were with we had to be witnesses for them. Um, when they go to jail, we take over the business for them, to do their wheeling and dealing, to set up all their lawyers, collect all the information, all types of things. It's probably left over to us, pretty much, if it comes down to it at the end of the day.

Similarly, Thistle said:

Believe it or not, they [women] are the one's that hold it all together in the end. They won't realise it; they do as they are told. When their man goes to jail, they are the one's who are still doing their man's part to a certain degree. Yeah, the club might pay, but it's usually the woman that organises lawyers and things like that. They organise the 'bashes' [parties/family days], it's the women who get in and do the work.

While these two comments, which illustrate a precarious power position, were understood by most of the women in this study, it was agreed that this activity went on unrecognised and unacknowledged by the men. Rather, the men took steps, sometimes with clear intent, on others no malicious resolve seemed apparent, which worked to ensure that women remained in their place. Women's formal position within the gang structures was limited through gang policy. They were not to get involved in gang business. As Rose said:

When they have a committee meeting no women are allowed in the room. And there are other specific times when women were not allowed in the rooms. I suppose when they had a gangbang [gang rape] too, no other women were allowed in.

Thistle added:

No woman's allowed at meetings. ... Ah, you don't ask too many questions. ... To be barefoot and pregnant. Most like them, well there are the ones who like their woman in the kitchen like [partner's name].

She further commented:

But I was an easy money supply for him as well. There's no two ways about that. ... I was his moneybag, his little, I mean I was his little showpiece, I guess at times.

Like Thistle, Freesia felt like a showpiece, her partner also stayed home while she went out to work. Freesia said:

I went to work and he stayed home and sold the drugs. ... We were treated like ornaments, to be seen but not heard.

Jasmine, Lily, Violet and Pansy all reflected on the women's role in a similar light. Daff adequately summed it all up when she said:

Well yeah, they make you feel like a slave. ... They have you running around and they want this and they want that and, ... yeah, they take over. ... Um, I think that their women were *their* women and they just did what they were bloody well told, more or less. *It's a good role!* Um, just to be subservient to men, um, to be at their beck and call, to do their deeds, to *not* be able to think for yourself, and to be completely vulnerable to what they want.

And when women got it wrong or did not comply to the men's expectations there were some harsh consequences. These usually came in the form of violence, as Freesia outlined:

I got into trouble. Through my partner, I'd get the bash. If I pissed them [members] off, I'd get the bash from my partner. You know, playing antics, or doing something that they didn't like.

Jasmine explained that it was the men's role to keep "the missus in line" and if he did not then he "would get whacked over" himself. Other expectations about women or rules came to light throughout the interviews and these included the following:

Lily: A woman doesn't get in between [the men], they don't fight over women. ... And you can't go out drinking with them all, when they go out drinking. ... Because a lot of them did a few things and they didn't want a missus coming because she might tell their missus. ... I wasn't allowed to wear colours [a patch or the club

colour] or things like that. There was none of this 'Sieg Heil business', not from a woman, you couldn't have anything like that from a woman.

Violet: Unspoken rules, like you make yourself scarce. Yeah, boys do their thing; girls do their sort of thing. Sometimes, I would do my own thing, and I'd hear their talk and everything, and I'd be quiet and I'd hear a lot more of the talk they had.

Rose: Women are there to be used for sex, you know to pleasure men, you know.... And also if you go out with one of them, then *you don't sleep with all of them*, you know. But there are other gangs where they believe that if one of them has a girlfriend, then she belongs to them all. Yeah, women are the scum of the earth, yeah, that's what they think.

Thistle: The big thing is we didn't start sleeping with all of them, and it is amazing how their opinion of you changes as soon as you start sleeping through the club.

In hindsight, the women interviewed expressed their thoughts about gang members' attitudes and beliefs about women. Most were critical of the way these men treated women, yet as will be shown later, most, although not condoning any of the men's actions, had some degree of understanding or empathy for the men in their lives as well as for some other gang members. Jasmine expressed her reflections in the following way:

Yeah, like shit, that's really deep ah. I mean you're sort of... *I think they, gang men hate women*. I mean people that fear, I mean, it's all one, they fear and they hate. They'll never admit to fearing them though.

She later added:

Oh man, I just think it's a rip off, *a total rip off to womanhood*, and to humanity really. I mean I'm okay that I sit here and say it's disgusting, but understanding that, as a woman, we are often in different positions of thinking. ... Let's be real. Who the hell wants to get out of a gang when they know what's gonna happen? Look, this guy I know, God, you know.... He's not gonna get out, [or change]. To me that's a reality. *To me the reality is, the buck stops with you and I, people like us*. That's how I see it.

In this last quote Jasmine was talking about the need to have some understanding of the total picture. Life for the men in gangs is not easy either. Many of the men that these women associated with, and have discussed in the interviews came from violent and abusive backgrounds too. The reports on their men that they included were just as sad, and horrific as their own backgrounds. The violence and abuse in general and towards women, which is presented throughout this study, the beliefs and attitudes about women, and any life strategies adopted by the men involved had all been learned or influenced by factors operating within the wider social context.

Some Challenges and Reflections.

The challenge from Jasmine, and some of the other women, was *not* simply to blame and condemn the men. Instead they argued, while ‘not letting the men off the hook’ for their actions, that there is a need to understand what facilitates gang membership and acceptance of the gang culture, and the activities that members and associates, both male and female, get entwined in. A greater understanding of the gang culture can only evolve when those involved, or previously involved actually come forward and share their experiences. And change will not be generated unless the factors that facilitate gang membership and gang associations are dealt with.

Similar challenges have been voiced elsewhere. For example, Blazer, Haimona, Henare and Matchitt (1997, p.45), who carried out research on violence amongst Maori whanau, concluded that, while holding the males accountable for their abuse of women, we need to understand the extent of violence in batterers backgrounds, and the effect that it has had on their lives. Some of the participants in this study argued for more holistic approaches to the problem of family/domestic violence that draw together the historical and social as well as, the present day personal factors that relate to violence. As one informant stated:

Once Maori understand why we are and how we have arrived at the situation we’re at now they often have much more clarity about what they need to do, and realise that the problem has accumulated over three or four generations and is not just what’s happening now.

(Cited in Balzer et al, 1997, p.42)

The recent publication of *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the Modern Man* (1999, pp.47), written by Susan Faludi, reveals a similar challenge. She highlights how men who feel powerless, insecure and vulnerable, in a world where they are ‘supposed’ to be powerful and in control, often turn to violence and abuse to reinforce their masculinity. Like the women interviewed, Faludi recognises that the “troubled ‘bad boys’ - who sense that they’ve lost jobs, skills, roles, wives, teams and a secure future” are a product, or “a symptom of a wider betrayal” (ibid, blurb).

It is also important to note that the women interviewed, in discussing and challenging the men’s treatment of women, did not deny their own involvement in maintaining the status quo. They reflected on how their staying and accepting the gang culture, and the abuse and

violence contributes to the next generation of gang members who are emerging in our society. These challenges seem particularly relevant considering New Zealand now has third generation gang members, with young males and females who are being brought up in and around gang contexts all their lives (Jasmine, 1998; Tam, 1999). And many of these youngsters, it is supposed, will find it difficult to live away from the precarious security that the gang structure provides.

As can be seen, the women in this study agreed that gang cultures in New Zealand were completely male dominated and the abuse of women was presented as being 'just a fact of life'. The women found themselves in, and presented themselves as having been in a double jeopardy; they sought freedom from abuse and violence with bold men in a deviant subgroup, only to find that they were subjected to further control, degradation, abuse and violence. On the contrary, these women stated and believed that they were vital to the functioning of the gang, of holding the system together and keeping the businesses running when their men were incarcerated or for other reasons, could not play their role within the gang. This belief facilitated notions and feelings of power in an otherwise powerless situation by minimising the effects of the actual powerlessness. And in some cases these women were committed to their men and a male institution, even though they were being abused and enslaved by the men.

Those 'Good Girl' Versus 'Bad Girl' Distinctions.

The gang-related women interviewed also affirmed that there was differential treatment of women within the gang contexts and special treatment was derived through their partners' status within the gang and through adhering strictly to traditional gender roles particularly with regards to their sexual behaviour. Many of the women discussed achieving respect and feeling safe because their men had a "rep" or held a status position in the gang. Good women were deemed to be those who were passive, nurturing caregivers who supported and bolstered their men's concept of masculinity. They did not belittle or denigrate their men in front of others and were generally submissive towards their men's wishes and instructions. Clearly, promiscuity was frowned upon and loose women, as such, were treated more harshly than women who fitted in with the 'good girl' category were. Serial monogamous relationships were considered reasonable, and overall the image of the gang woman as being into wild sex parties with many gang members as highlighted in the earlier male orientated research, did not fit in with the realities that have been presented here.

Throughout the interviews there was a sharp distinction made between partners of gang members and *other* women or the 'dirty girls'. These later women were often presented as 'bad girls'. They were perceived as sexually promiscuous and were considered a threat by partners of gang members. If partners behaved like 'dirty girls' they were treated as such, and often with violence. Female partners were off limits to all members as they were deemed property of the member. Dirty girls on the other hand, were generally for the men's sexual entertainment. Some of these *other* women offered their services freely to the men, while others, on occasion, were prostituted for drugs or money. The men isolated their partners from the dirty girls, but the partners also tended to reinforce this distinction and separated themselves from these *other* women. This was usually done by drawing upon the 'good girl'/'bad girl' concepts that were and still are rife within the traditional gender role stereotypes. Both the men and partners of gang members sanctioned, put down and blamed the dirty girls if they are abused or are openly exploited by the men.

This distinction between the 'good girls' and the 'bad girls' appears to have generated a lot of mistrust and insecurity between the women involved in gangs. Daisy's story highlights how women watch other women's behaviours closely; they are aware that their men or partners have *other* women and, as challenging their actual partners about their activities can bring disastrous consequences in the form of physical and emotional assaults, the women attempt to control these *other* women to a degree. What arises out of these complex dynamics is a system in which women who face similar or joint hardship and oppression appear to have no empathy for one another. Rather, they tend to isolate each other and reinforce the situation that their men have created.

Sometimes the gang-related women interviewed reported that they were able to form close relationships with other partners of gang members. These statements were often made with some form of qualification, which indicated that there were limitations to these friendships. Rhodo explained:

Um, I did get along with [name of another gang member's partner]. I got along with her. She was fun. Although I still didn't trust her 100 per cent with [Rhodo's partner's name]. ... Like with the other females at that time, it made my life hell. I mean, girls were hanging around that club, dogs, I mean, like flies. And I knew that if he wanted he could sleep with *any* of them.

This inability to trust other partners of gang members also limited whom the women could talk to about their situation. For example, Jasmine talked about how isolated she felt when her man was involved with another woman. She said:

I think I know how it happens to gang women, 'cause gang women don't know who to trust. You really don't know whom to trust. Like me, I mean, he was mucking around.... So actually, you don't know to trust, you know, you just *never* know. It's like, it's the sort of lifestyle, you know, and if you [or they] are on drugs and on drink and that, it might slip one night. It might not cost you anything, but it *will* certainly cost some person, or the person who you told. And they make sure you know.

While some women had family to discuss life's downside with, some of the gang-related women became totally isolated and found it difficult to talk problems through with anyone. The women interviewed reported that the social workers and counsellors some of them had approached appeared to lack any real understanding of the women's lives and their concerns. Going to the police or other authorities was also out of the question as doing so in most circumstances, would be perceived as narking. Within the gang culture, like other criminal contexts, narking is taken very seriously and both males and females within gang cultures are cautious about what they reveal to outsiders.

The No Narking Norm.

One of the most obvious and well-stated rules within gang cultures, like other criminal cultures, is the 'NO NARKING' norm (Newbold, 1978, p.319). The no narking rule in gangs is well entrenched as it is within the wider criminal culture. The difference is, perhaps, that the consequences for narking within the gang scene are more 'in your face', or are more overtly conveyed through illustrative acts of violence, threats and intimidatory practices. And through horrendous stories, sometimes embellished, about the life and hard times of those who narked in the past which convey a deeply understood message about the reality of the consequences. As within the wider criminal context, or the prison culture, these stories are relayed "often enough to become a part of the lore and mythology" (Newbold, 1978, p.320) of the particular institution and "constitute a powerful deterrent against the more serious deviations from the prisoner's [or gang's] code" (ibid, p.321).

A man's status within the criminal culture is dependent on his role and his ability to conform to his particular subcultural norms. Many of the practices, beliefs and attitudes of the criminal or gang worlds are said to be the characteristics that are well grounded within the lower class context. Thus the criminal and gang cultures adopt notions of status, reputation, toughness, intelligence or smartness, luck and excitement that have been conceptualised and have gained their meaning in accordance to lower class assumptions and "a distinctive tradition many centuries old" (Miller, 1958, p.19). Similarly, Spergel (1995, p.165-167) notes that the behaviours, beliefs and attitudes adopted by those joining gangs are "an outgrowth of a natural social learning process in certain low-income and/or transitional areas." As such, socialisation into a gang takes place in a given time and context, and the behaviours can be seen as functional to survival within that context. Gang members "are not alienated from conventional norms and values" (ibid, p.166) within the community. And widely desired and accepted social goals; status, good income, accumulation of personal property, sense of identity and so forth, remain desired outcomes, although the means to achieve them steps outside accepted social standards. In gang/criminal cultures, narking severely limits other's access to such goals.

Extending the discussion on this topic, Sutherland (1937, pp. 10-26) and Irwin (1980, pp.11-12) make it clear that the no narking code, presently adopted by gang members and associates, emerged out of, and is an adaptation of an early thieves' code of practice. Such a code, although not documented, was required because of the number of thieves and their extended networks both inside and outside prison, and in lower class areas. Anyone who went outside this code and informed authorities of thieves' business was surely sanctioned. As Sutherland (1937, p.14) outlined:

There are few fixed rules of ethics, but there are some common understandings among thieves. ... It is understood that no thief must squawk (inform) on another. The instances where professional thieves have squawked are so rare no serious consideration of this angle is necessary. Prisoners squawk for one purpose only – to relieve themselves of punishment. Professional thieves have no thought of receiving punishment while in the hands of the fix, and they have no incentive to squawk. Police officials, prosecutors, and others rarely question professional thieves. They have or else haven't got a rap for the prisoner. In either case there is no gain from questioning. If a thief should squawk, the other thieves would not descend to the same plane and squawk on him. They use much better methods. The worst penalty is to keep him broke. This is done by spreading the news that he has squawked, which makes it impossible for him to get into any mob. That is the greatest disgrace and the greatest hardship that can befall a thief.

Likewise, the police contacts spoken to during this research acknowledged the sanctions administered to gang informants. Needless to say, they were dubious about revealing anything that would jeopardise their source of information or put the informant at greater risk of harm. But, they did acknowledge the power of violence and the threat of such as being a major factor in maintaining this norm (Neale, 1998; Stokes, 1998). And as indicated in media reports about Black Power's killing of Crown witness Christopher Crean (*Sunday Star-Times*, 19 Oct., 1997, p. A:5) and, as outlined in Appendix II, the finger chopping incident carried out by the Fourth Reich (*Press*, 4 June, 1998, p.5) there are no boundaries set which limit the extent to which punishment for informing on the gang can go.

Both the women in this study and the writer, had/have no illusions about the existence and reality of this well-respected code, and to some extent this study has been restricted because of it. The consequences of breaking this "absolute prohibition" (Newbold, 1989, p.264) are profound and are deeply embedded within the minds of all involved and it is the fear of these consequences that stifle what can be told. Nevertheless, the reflections shared during the interviews provide insight and understanding of the women's experiences. The comment on marking occurred in following way:

Lily: The rules, mmm, the usual was, you know, ah, shut your mouth and don't say nothing. ... You just had to keep your mouth shut. You see nothing, you say nothing type thing.

Violet: Stay out of gang business, you know nothing, um, but if you did know something, you didn't sort of thing. You hear but you don't hear.

Freesia: Yeah, you had to keep your mouth shut.

Daff: You could do what you wanted as long as it was within the realms of their rules. Um, you didn't blab. *You didn't blab!* ... Or you got a dong, and quite seriously and consistently too. It wouldn't be just a one off thing. Um, I guess I'd have never fitted in there, 'cause I don't like conforming.

Thistle: If you have never opened your mouth wide enough for them to look at you then basically, they won't look at you. But if you give them reason to look at you then, yeah, they probably will think that you will go to the cops. Then the threats get thrown. ... Loose lips sink ships and um, basically, if they ... on really serious things. If they don't want to be heard and if you happen to be there and hear something you shouldn't then you'll be told. You just get told, "You didn't hear that, eh?" And you'd know by the tone of the voice, that no, you didn't hear it and that people are not supposed to know.

Pansy: It's nearly the same as what it is in jail. Say nothing, hear nothing. That's one of the biggest rules. You say nothing you hear nothing. ... They'll use knives, chains, yeah, all sorts of things. Fists, dragging them [the narks] by ropes at the back of a car or a truck down a gravel road. They take them out, way out where there is nobody and nothing, out there. You say something or do something you know the consequences. You know what's gonna happen. ... They don't like someone that lags on someone else. You might as well go and cut your own throat.

It was not only the women interviewed who commented on this 'no narking' norm. Police, refuge workers, probation officers, working girls, youth workers, and social workers as well as present and former gang members also talked about this aspect of gang life in formal and informal discussions. And for obvious reasons, many of these people did not want to have their comments recorded although they were willing to discuss these issues. The following quotes illustrate the underlying tone of much of this discussion.

Det. Neale: If women run to the police they are seen as narks. *And that's a no-no!*

Det. Stokes: [With]...a lot of the gang culture is that there is no co-operation with the police. There's no narking, so a huge amount of gang violence is unreported, plus the victims are largely in the criminal scene themselves... There is so much that goes on in the underworld that the police just don't hear about. ... The gang scene seems worse because people know the consequences of narking.

Morrigan: Being a *nark*, women internalise the culture and learn that to nark is a major sin, which is punishable.

And a gang associate illustrates how this message gets across:

Tane: I know this ganger who killed his partner's dog, you know. "If you ever nark on me, then I'll deal to ya and this'll prove it!" Then he slaughters her dog in front of her.

Women soon learn that narks are the lowest of the lowest, so to speak, within the gang scene, and whether they are male or female, they are treated even more harshly than women are in general. To some degree, knowing this further isolates women because talking about their partners' behaviours to others or about other gang members to their partners is perceived in a similar light to narking. These sorts of discussion often resulted in a stern reprimand, an emotional/verbal assault or a physical assault. Most women erred on the side of caution rather than discuss their concerns, as Lily disclosed:

Once he wasn't around they [other gang members] would try and um, pull me around the corner or try to 'chance it'. So I had to be careful and it was hard to tell him if there was something going with one of the other guys.... 'cause if I said something I would probably be the one that would get the, you know, hiding. Yeah, so rather than tell him that one of his 'brothers' was trying something on I kept quiet. So you have to be careful.

Most women acknowledged that they learned it was often better to remain silent about both gang activities and their own personal lives. Much of this learning was conveyed through violent tactics, as Violet explained: "*Violence silences you.*"

As with other norms, the no narking rule in gang contexts is reinforced through the gang's particular socialisation process, which draws heavily on violence, threats and intimidatory practices to get the message across. Many of the women interviewed in this study, and this may be the case for many male gang members (see Lala, 1996, p.102), were primed towards accepting the no narking norms prior to becoming closely involved with the gang structures. It will be argued that family contexts that are emersed in violence and abuse predispose a child/youth to the concepts underlying the no narking norm. Many of these families are known to be 'trading in secrets' or have attempted to hide the violent and abusive dynamics on which the family functions.

Socialisation into the Gang Scene.

The family is said to be one of the most powerful socialisation agents in society as this is where we begin to internalise cultural norms and values (Robertson, 1989, p.81). When a child's family of origin is essentially a battleground the youngster takes the beliefs and attitudes that support the ongoing battles on board. One of the most powerful beliefs that enable family violence and abuse to re-occur is the belief that family business is private. Susan Steinmetz argues that the family has operated on:

The premise that the family is a sacred, private institution in which outsiders have no right to interfere [and this] can be supported by examining the legal attitudes towards violence.

(Steinmetz, 1977, pp.3-4)

For many years family, friends, neighbours and society turned a blind eye to family violence; it remained hidden and no one really wanted to know about it (Balzer et al, 1997, p.23). The

belief that family troubles are private still holds in some families today even though family violence is now recognised as a major social problem within industrial societies. And as I can attest from my involvement with men's stopping violence programmes, some men employ and promulgate this belief in an attempt to avoid taking responsibility for their choice to use violence and abuse within the family context. To compound matters, many victims and perpetrators, like the women interviewed in this study, report much shame and embarrassment around family violence and this also works towards remaining silent about such activity. Children growing up in these environments learn similar behaviours and know not to talk about what is going on. Thus young gangsters, male or female, who grew up in violent and abusive environments are often well attuned to the no narking concept and practices.

As many of the women interviewed in this study [7/10] report experiencing violence and abuse within the family context, it is suggested that they were amenable to the no narking norm of the gang in their later years. They were predisposed to minimise the open usage violence and abuse, and other negative type norms adopted by the gangs. Therefore, when considering the women's socialisation into the gang scene it needs to be acknowledged that the process began well before their actual involvement with the gang.

To further explore the processes that impact on women once they are connected to the gang scene a group socialisation model outlined by Moreland and Levine (1982 cited in Cotterell, 1996, pp.57-58; Lala, 1996, pp.47-56; Moreland, Levine & Cini, 1993, pp.104-129) will be used to assist in understanding the gang-related women's experiences. Lala (1996) adopted this model in New Zealand in an attempt to understand the role of the gang in former members' lives. And although Lala found some inconsistencies between the group socialisation model presented and gang members' experiences the different stages of socialisation highlighted in the model were helpful in understanding the men's passage through the gang culture. And in doing so the model provides an interesting base from which women's involvement can be examined and understood.

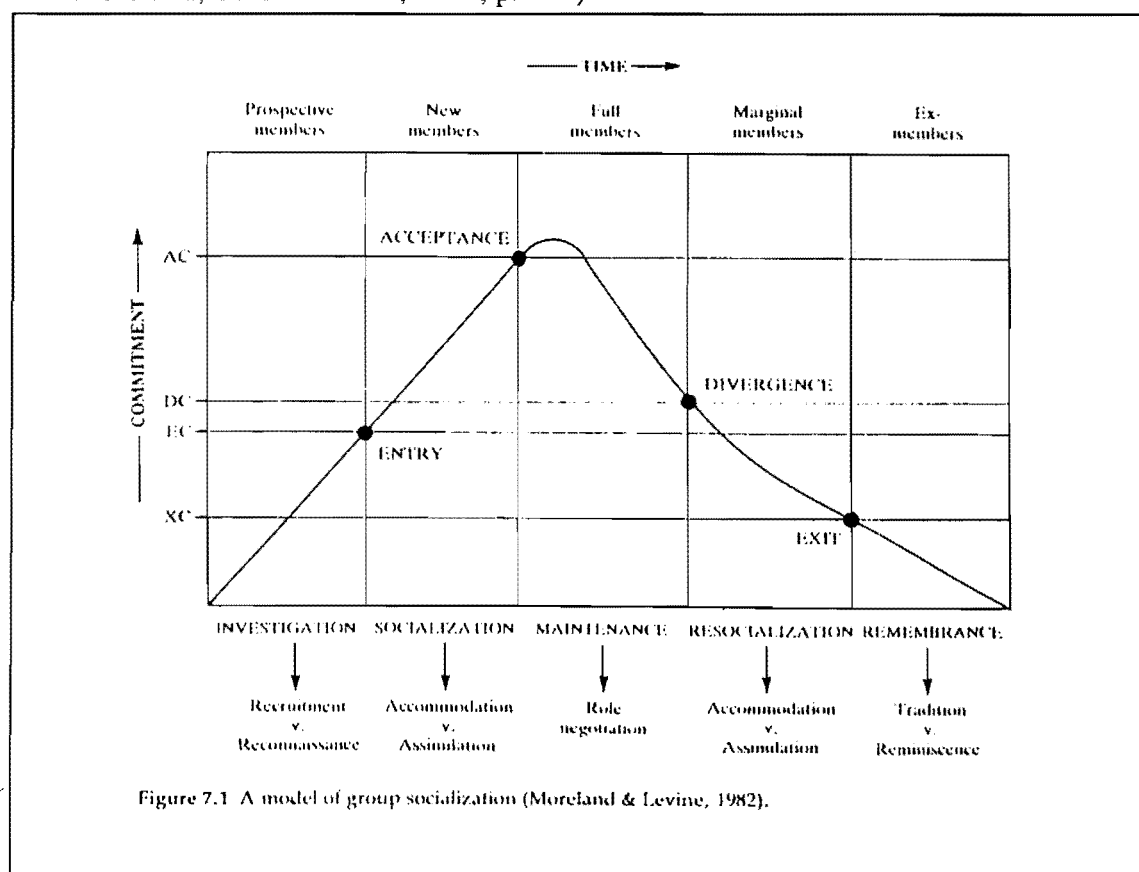
Moreland and Levine proposed that individuals passage through groups can be understood as a series of stages that trace a number of reciprocal processes that operate on both group and individual levels. As illustrated in Figure 3 and outlined by Moreland, Levine & Cini (1993, p.106):

...both the group and the individual engage in an ongoing evaluation of their relationship together, comparing its value to that of other relationships that are available to them. On the basis of these evaluations, feelings of commitment arise between the group and the individual. These feelings change in systematic ways over time, rising or falling to previously established decision criteria. When a decision is reached, a role transition takes place, the individual enters a new phase of group membership, and the relationship between the group and the individual is transformed. Evaluation proceeds, often along different dimensions than before, producing further changes in commitment and subsequent role transitions. In this way, the individual can pass through five phases of group membership (investigation, socialization, maintenance, resocialization and remembrance), separated by four role transitions (entry, acceptance, divergence, and exit).

With relevance to gangs, Lala (1996, pp.47-56) found that this model fitted well with the literature on gang recruitment processes. In interviews with gang members, he found that on initial contact with gangs a subtle investigation period often occurs that can be initiated either by the individuals seeking gang involvement or by full gang members who assess and attract newcomers (ibid, p.104). This is a period of reconnaissance for the individual and recruitment for the gang. From this point, Lala indicates that the process may become more skewed in favour of the gang than the individual, but that the general theme of the model still fits well.

Figure 1: Moreland & Levine's Model of Group Socialisation.

(Source: Moreland, Levine & Cini, 1993, p.107.)



After initial contact with the gang has been negotiated a process occurs whereby both the individual and the gang evaluate each other. Many gangs make a number of subtle observations in which the newcomer's acceptance of gang norms and values are judged, and some argue that newcomers evaluate the gang lifestyle (Lala, 1996, pp.50, 105). Once a newcomer is accepted, a transition period begins where formal procedures, or group initiation begins. Thus, being accepted as a prospect and being tested about his commitment to the gang marks entry to the gang. Then group socialisation begins. The gang works to ensure that the new comer or prospect can face up to the role of a gang member and that he understands the loyalty and demands required by the gang. This is where the strong in-group bonding takes place, and ambivalence and/or hostility towards outsiders is observed and fostered, which helps to generate the strong sense of belonging and the gang identity that gang members report (ibid, p.106-107). Marsh (1892, p.41) states that this is a period where:

Gang members would be continually "testing" for "class", "staunchness", "fighting ability", and the Prospectors had to be seen to have the ability to "take a hiding".

The prospect's commitment to the gang culture is scrutinised through a number of 'tests' ranging from carrying out orders, to acts of violence, and/or theft. One subject in Marsh's study claimed that he had to watch his girlfriend being gang raped (Marsh, 1982, p.44), although it is to be noted that many of the gangs have now outlawed this practice. Once the prospect had demonstrated his courage and loyalty to the gang in this way he was given his patch. The prospecting period may be anywhere from around three months up to two years and the 'patching up' celebrations are considered a real milestone, in terms of gang life.

In line with Moreland & Levine's model of group socialisation, this recognition or acceptance of the newcomer into full gang membership marks the end of socialisation and the beginning of the maintenance phase. However, they would argue that in most group contexts the socialisation period is more a time of assimilation and accommodation where both the group and the individual attempts to influence the other. The individual, they argue, also tries to "change the group so that it can better satisfy his or her personal needs" (Moreland, Levine & Cini, 1993, p.106.). Once the group and the individual needs seem congruent, the next role transition, acceptance, occurs and this marks the beginning of the maintenance period.

During the maintenance period, Moreland and Levine claim, both the group and the individual engage in negotiations with regards to “a special role” (ibid, p.106) that fulfils both the groups goal’s and individual needs. And when both parties are satisfied, the commitment level of both the gang and the individual, remain high. According to Lala, (1996, p.51) the role positions in the gang scene are clearly defined and movement into high status positions, for example; President, Vice-President or Sergeant-at-Arms, can only be achieved by observing clearly established rules and processes, and in meeting strict criteria. In Marsh’s study some gang members believed that those elected or who fight their way to these status positions are required to have “a good brain, and be cunning and smart” while others felt that the president needed to be “the best fighter” (Marsh, 1982, p.53.). Lala indicates that the negotiations and evaluations will be repeated many times during gang membership, and that these maintenance processes accompany any changes in role position that the individual gang member’s experiences during his time with the gang (Lala, 1996, p.52). Nowadays, with some gangs being more organised, the gang hierarchy is likely to be based on leadership and management ability, and is linked to skill rather than brawn and the need to maintain a low profile. Now perhaps, more than the past, violent tactics tend to be delegated to prospects and junior members (Neale, 1998; Newbold, 2000, p.208; Stokes, 1998; Pansy, 1998).

Marsh’s research report highlights the methods used by the gang to maintain power over the individual during the maintenance period. The various methods of discipline used to ensure that the gang’s goals are realised include; assault, the threat of violence, warnings, fines, being isolated or ridiculed, and de-patching the member. Clearly, junior members would find it difficult to express opinions and feelings that run contrary to the gang’s norms (Marsh, 1982, p.57). Thus, the influence of the gang remains greater during this maintenance phase than an individual’s influence over the gang does.

As illustrated in Moreland and Levine’s model, should negotiations around role positions not reach a satisfactory conclusion and fail to fulfil both individual and group needs the next role transition, divergence, occurs and a resocialisation process eventuates. During this period, it is argued that the group attempts to influence the individual so that he/she will contribute more towards the group’s goals while the individual attempts to bring the group in line with their own personal needs. If both processes succeed then the member converges back to full membership and the maintenance phase. If the process fails both parties commitment levels

decline to a point where the exit transition period marks the beginning of the next phase in Moreland and Levine's model, that being the remembrance period.

During the resocialisation phase, Lala found that many of his participants acknowledged a growing "dissatisfaction with gang life" (1996, p.114) and that the gang no longer worked to meet the individual member's personal needs. Some of the men he interviewed indicated that they started to question the value of the gang in their lives. Lala quoted Evan as saying:

I'd just had enough, had a guts full (sic) of gang life. Always looking over my shoulder. ... The only vision I had of where it was going to take me was a life sentence, or to the cemetery. I seen a lot of my mates go there.

(Evan cited in Lala, 1996, p.92)

Others realised that the violence was having a negative impact on their lives and their families. Other realisations made during this resocialisation period included growing tired of police harassment and conflict with the law, and a disillusionment with intra-gang conflict and internal power struggles (Lala, 1996, pp. 139-141).

Moreland and Levine's model of group socialisation suggests that there is a reasonably equal relationship when a group member contemplates terminating their membership, but in gang contexts this may not be as straight forward as the model implies. Lala proposed that:

Theoretically, because the gang holds an unequal share of power in the relationship, once one is a member it becomes the gang's decision whether one can resign membership.

(1996, p.52.)

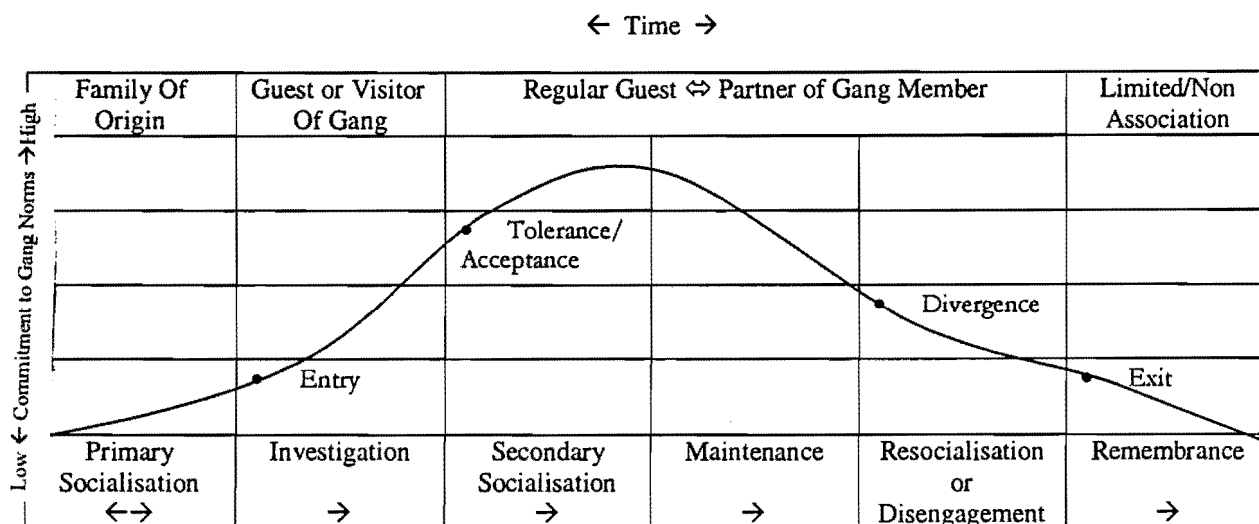
In his research, however, he found that only one of the gang members interviewed recalled having any trouble leaving the gang. With a small sample of eight former gang members, Lala advised readers to avoid drawing any major conclusions from his data about the exit process (Lala, 1996, p.113). There is frequent anecdotal evidence (for example see *Sunday Star-Times*, 24 May 1998) that *some* members have great difficulty leaving the gang scene. This appears to be dependent on the gang, the role the member played, his knowledge of gang business and whether or not the gang perceives his leaving as a threat (personal knowledge; Jasmine, 1998). At the resocialisation stage, religion may play a significant role in drawing gang members away from the gang culture. Lala found that religion played a significant role

in the post gang lives of half [4/8] the former gang members that he interviewed. It is possible that church or religious involvement may be “a means to develop new social self-concepts” (Lala, 1996, p.116), but further research is needed to substantiate this.

With Moreland and Levine’s model, the remembrance period is characterised by the group’s evaluation of the prior relationship with the individual, which is based on the group’s cultural traditions. And the individual reminisces over his/her time with the group. Over a period of time, the commitment level between the group and the individual is reduced (Moreland, Levine & Cini, 1993, p.108). Lala found that his participants had “apparently contradictory recollections of the good and bad aspects of their gangs” (Lala, 1996, p.114) with some aspects of gang life, such as the gang’s notoriety, being presented as both a positive and a negative characteristic of gang life. Some men interviewed recollected the good times, yet made clear comments that warned others to stay away from the gang culture (ibid, p.137). The general processes outlined here are not too dissimilar from those that the women in this study have alluded to in their stories. However, there are some differences in the way the gang operates during these phases when it comes to keeping women in their place and to ensure that the men maintain a higher status within the gang culture.

Gang Socialisation Processes and Women.

By following a process similar to that mapped out by Moreland and Levine, and adopted by Lala, as presented in Figure 2, women’s entry to, and socialisation into the gang culture can be further understood as progressing through a series of stages. As indicated earlier, the women’s primary socialisation within the family of origin appears to have a huge influence, and allows the initial gang socialisation process to be easily assimilated or accommodated. Many of the women in this study were welcomed into the gang context as either guests or visitors of gang members. When this occurs there is a general agreement, often unspoken that implies that guests or visitors will be treated respectfully, as they ‘belong’ to or are property of the gang member they are with. Plus those gangs that open their bars to a ‘select public’ do not want to frighten off their patrons. With particular regard to women, this general ruling is upheld as long as the women concerned behave in accordance to the ‘good girl’ categories outlined earlier, that they respect or at least go along with the gang’s way of doing things, and they do not ask too many questions.

Figure 2: Mapping Women's Movement through the Gang Context.

As guests or visitors at gang functions the women come under scrutiny not only from gang members but also the partners of gang members. Lily, Violet, Thistle, Rhodo, Daisy and Pansy all reflected on memories of being watched when they began their association with their particular gang. Daisy, as described earlier, highlighted how she was challenged by the men about her dress, she had her hair cut off, beer thrown in her face and was confronted by the Prez for not answering him. She also talked about how the women would watch her and challenge her when her partner or a friend did not accompany her. It was only when the other partners of gang members were completely sure that Daisy was *not* a dirty girl and therefore no threat to the other women's relationship with their men that the feeling of being watched by the other women subsided.

While she was being observed, Daisy noticed that some women were made more welcome than others were and this usually occurred when the woman was known to be a relative of a gang member. She also noticed how one member's sister could come and go as she pleased, while partners of gang members were only allowed to be present at the clubrooms at certain times. The reflections made by other women in this study were similar and while some were bothered about being watched others found this experience manageable. For example Lily said:

Oh yeah, they did watch, yeah. Yeah, but I was probably too drunk to realise what was happening, half the time. And the girls, I found, they were all right as long as I

didn't go anywhere near their men. Once they realised, um, it was like, "Oh, [partner's name] has found himself a missus", and um, then they were okay.

Thistle stated that:

...they watched me. I didn't really care. It didn't really worry me. Nah, its that [gang member's name] ... always used to tell me to keep away from the women. He told me not to get caught in this scenario, in the wife scenario. Even the dirty girls' scenario was just as bad, you know. He always used to warn me, who was bad news and who wasn't.

Thistle could cope with being observed by the other women, but she felt that her long-term gang member friend looked after her and over time other members had gained a respect for her and her friend, Briar. Thistle adds:

Well, I don't know, they had what you would call a respect for us; they didn't pass the line with us. They didn't try to pick us up because they knew that we had certain friends, you see. [Gang member's name] was there, the friends we knew they were guys that we had never slept with, so there was no cause for worry.

Violet, however, hated being watched, she said:

I think, at the time, I always sat with the right people. I have a happy personality and people stuck up for me. If anyone said anything bad about me someone would stand up for me. *Yeah, I was watched, and I hated it.* Sometimes I had to talk fast and talk my way out of things, until I was accepted.

Once the women felt that they were accepted the feeling of being constantly watched reduced. During this investigation period the women report that they had already begun to fit in with the culture, they had also observed what was occurring and had noted how women were treated. And when women were assaulted or came under reprimand, they were often blamed for their own fate. By this time the women had begun to strategise, and the strategies or patriarchal bargains adopted would no doubt be influenced by the strategies that operated within the women's family of origin. These women were also able to observe the strategies that worked for other women involved. Some had heard 'the stories' that outlined the consequences for inappropriate behaviour and made subtle changes in their own behaviours, and their 'good' behaviour helped to facilitate the feeling acceptance.

During this phase, it appears as though women are relatively free to come or go. If they don't like the experiences that they hear about or observe, an exit from the scene and culture is easily managed. And most of the women interviewed tell or advise others to take an exit here. Likewise, the police acknowledge some women can attend gang functions to have a look at the scene and leave without too many problems. It is when they become heavily involved, become a girlfriend of a member, or need the gang for a supply of drugs and so on that things become more difficult, especially if they become isolated from friends, family and acquaintances outside the gang (Neale, 1998; Stokes, 1998).

Once a woman has become accepted and is tolerated as a frequent visitor or as a partner of a gang member the gang's socialisation process appears to become more direct with clear instruction on appropriate behaviour coming from gang members and other partner's of gang member. Again Daisy's example provides evidence of these secondary socialisation processes. Her partner clearly told her that he had to teach her how things were done. And it is demonstrated that violence, intimidation and abuse are the primary means for conveying such learning. During this stage those women who saw the gang or gang member as a means of protection leaned towards blaming themselves for any violence and abuse that they endured. And some of the women interviewed felt more accepted as a result of being beaten. After all, this was simply the ways things were done. And as Daisy stated:

You know, in some ways I sort of felt, you know, the bigger the hidings and the more people who knew about it the more accepted I become with everyone else. I was fitting in. You know, how could you be with a gang member and not get a hiding.

Thistle added:

You learn through their intimidation and everything like that. 'cause in their own way, ah I don't know, they make you think very lowly of yourself. That's how they try to get their message across, via emotional blackmail and things like that. You find a lot of women who are stuck in the gang scene have very low self-esteem. ... And they [gang members] isolate their women from everything they know in order for them not to see the reality outside the walls that have been built around them.

By the time the women moved into the maintenance stage the coping strategies learned and developed during the socialisation process are well developed. During this maintenance stage, as will be discussed later, the men kept applying power and control tactics to keep their

women in their place and the women, having internalised their gang's norms, kept employing the various coping strategies, or patriarchal bargains that they had developed. But, the compromises that they made soon came to the fore. The women struggled with personal conflict and continued to try and create an acceptable position for themselves. They presented themselves to outsiders and each other as accepting their position while rejecting it within themselves. And as time went on some of the women tried subtly to work for change with their partners during this time. When these negotiations failed the women's commitment to the gang, and their partner declined and the reality of their situation could no longer be disguised. Many started to question their position begun to look outside the gang context.

Sometimes the extremes of the violence and abuse or a crisis event facilitated the need for change. Slowly the women diverged into the next phase of the group socialisation model, resocialisation or disengagement. The decisions made to leave a gang member partner and the gang context were often fraught with hurdles or barriers, from the partners, sometimes from the gang itself as a whole and from within the wider social system. Sometimes the barriers to leaving seemed insurmountable, but in time all the women interviewed moved away from the gang scene. And as will be demonstrated later, a resocialisation process occurred that gave these women the confidence to begin to make some different choices in their lives, not only for themselves, but also for their children and in some case their partners. For some women, religion became a prominent feature during the resocialisation period as the religious frameworks provided a structure through which life could be worked, and facilitated a sense of security during the ambiguities of change. Slowly an exit from the gang situation that they were in was negotiated, and although some of the women interviewed still have some contact with gang members and associates, all were in the position of remembrance at the time of the interview.

Generally the women interviewed, like some of the former gang members in Lala's research, remember a mixture a good and bad times with the gang and a reflection of these memories is presented within the women's stories. All women interviewed report having learned, or grown from their time within the gang and many have taken up furthering their education. All have made major changes in their lives for both themselves and their children. And all are courageous in their attempts to help others where they can. While these women may advise other women that gang life is 'dangerous' and to be very careful or to stay away, they tend to convey a sense of compassion, or understanding for those, both male and female, currently

involved in gangs. They hope others will come to understand the gang culture, and the tactics of power and control over women that operate in gangs and they cautiously shared their memories so others will be more able to make informed choices with regards to their involvement.

Reflection.

In summation, the gang-related women were in a no-win situation, their contradictory, but variable, position meant that they were bound between several conflicting norms both within the gang and in the wider social environment. Having escaped from violent and abusive homes, many had attempted to reject violence and abuse, yet they found themselves in a position where they accepted such as a way of life. As these women entered the gang context they brought with them a set of beliefs and attitudes learned within their families of origin. And for those women who emerged out of violent and abusive family situations, the perquisites for gang life had already been mastered. They already knew the basis of the no marking norm, and had previously developed a number of strategies for surviving within these 'dangerous' contexts. The traditional beliefs and attitudes that pertain to women's role and place often put forward within society and within the gang context support these strategies. Being susceptible to the gang culture, the women then progressed or negotiated their way through a number of phases, as outlined in Moreland and Levine's group socialisation model, in which they learned about and adapted to the gang culture.

To survive within the male domain of the gang, with its openly abusive practices towards women, the gang women developed strategies or patriarchal bargains in an attempt to create a better position for themselves. These strategies contributed to the women's contradictory position, in that they provided individual women with a sense of power and/or security they also actually worked to maintain the abuse and degradation of women within these contexts. Therefore, the women object to the way women were treated; yet they colluded with this treatment by blaming themselves or the victims for what they received. Furthermore, these strategies worked to make the male control easier by isolating and separating women from each other, thus making it less likely that gang women will hold the men accountable for their actions on a collective basis.

Understanding the contradictions was not easy for the gang-related women interviewed. Living by the rules, playing the game and the strategising was all about survival within their

context. The statement presented below, which emerged in many of the interviews conducted during this study, encapsulates this reality, not only for the women interviewed, but also for gang members, social workers, and the police alike. As Daisy put it:

It's just the way things are!

This statement represents a sense of powerlessness, hopelessness, confusion and despair on the one hand, and a degree of acceptance and resignation on the other. One just has to learn the strategies and rules to survive in their environment. Merely to view these women as passive victims would be a major mistake, for they are survivors in their own right.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

MEN'S POWER & CONTROL TACTICS

& WOMEN'S COPING STRATEGIES.

Introduction.

It is clear from the women's profiles and data presented thus far, that the men in gangs employ a number of power and control tactics that keep gang-related women's options limited within the gang context. Physical/sexual violence, emotional/verbal abuse and/or intimidation have a heavy influence on women's behaviour, the decisions they may make and on their lives as a whole. It may be claimed that these tactics are no different from those used by some men towards women in violent heterosexual relationships outside the gang cultures. And one has to admit that the overall tactics employed by gang members are similar to those used by many men in New Zealand society who have later become the respondents of protection orders. A total of 21,095 protection orders were granted between July 1996 and April 1999 and of these 91 per cent were taken out against men for a range of violent or abusive behaviours (NZ Dept. for Courts Domestic Violence Database, Appendix VII). The behaviours that can be cited within affidavits when applying for protection orders range from sexual and/or physical assault through to psychologically abusive tactics such as emotional/verbal abuse, coercion and threat, harassment and/or subtle forms of intimidation (NZ Dept. for Courts, 1996, pp.2-3). It will be argued here that the gang culture not only intensifies the use of these behaviours but also brings in to the picture a number of dynamics that are not normally present within the 'typical' family violence scenario.

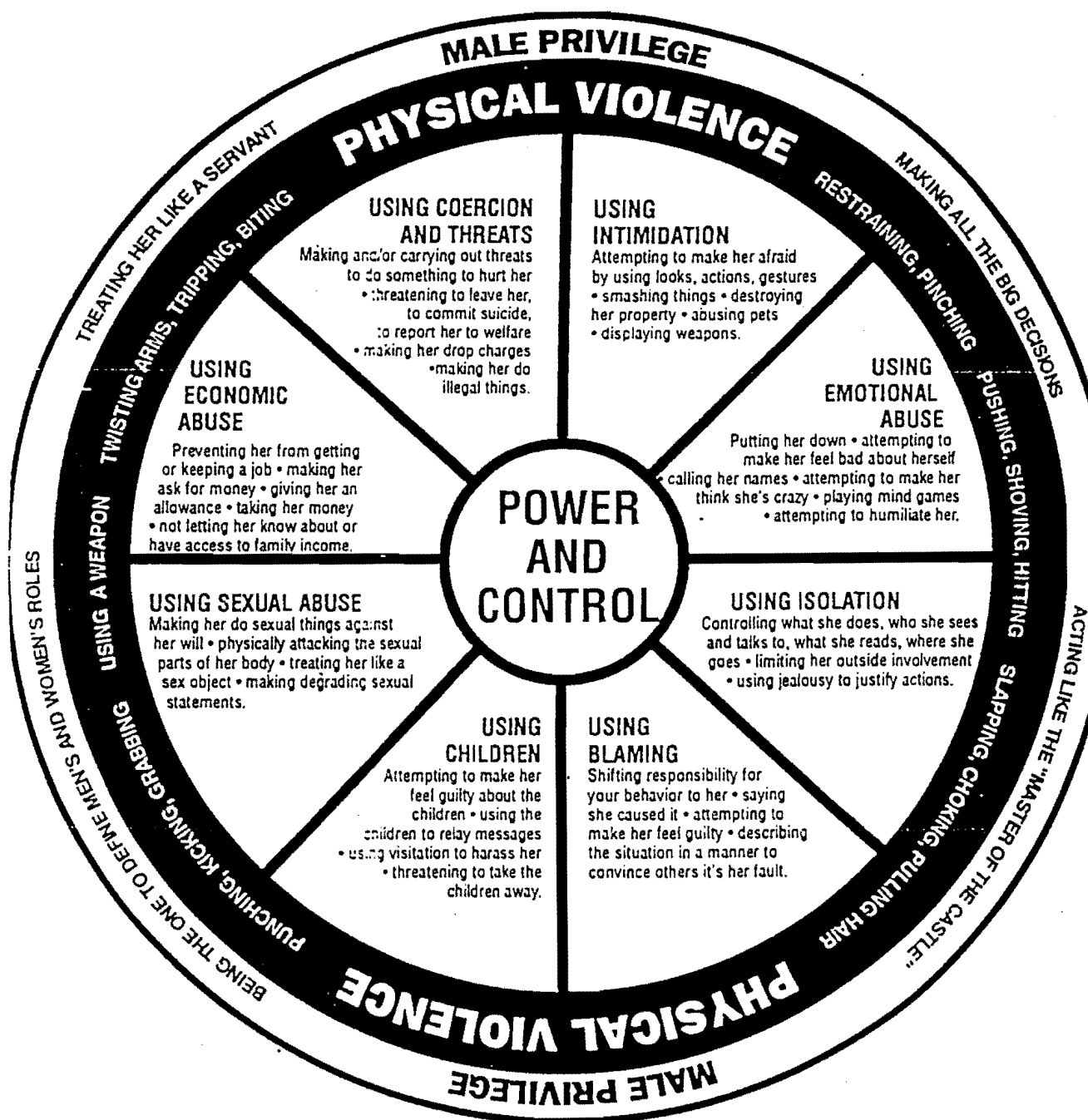
In this section the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project, Power and Control Model [DAIP Model] will be expanded to include the collective forces of the gang. In doing so, rationale for the above-mentioned argument becomes clear. Having explored these power and control tactics, the strategies or patriarchal bargains adopted by the women interviewed to resist or counter these power and control tactics will be discussed.

The Duluth Abuse Intervention Project: Power and Control Model.

The DAIP Model arose out of an initiative in Duluth, Minnesota in 1981 that aimed to provide an effective intervention process for community agencies and law enforcers when handling domestic violence cases. Nine agencies came together for this project under the

Figure 3: Modified Version of the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project Power and Control Model: Power and Control Wheel.

(Source: National Network of Stopping Violence Services New Zealand, *Stopping Violence Programme for Men: Resource Material*. 1998, p.3.)



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umbrella of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project to develop policies and procedures, which governed the responses made in such cases (Glover, 1995, p. 85-86; Pence & Paymar, 1990, p.iv-2). The Duluth initiative engaged with thousands of women who had been beaten, abused and intimidated, and with many “Men who Batter” (Pence & Paymar, 1990, cover) who attended the DAIP Model educational/counselling programmes over a five-year testing period. From these beginnings, Ellen Pence and Michael Paymar, with the aid of others involved, produced an educational curriculum titled *Power and Control: Tactics of Men who Batter: An Educational Curriculum* (1990). This curriculum presented a framework and philosophy for working with men who use violence and abuse against women and children which has been trialed, adopted and further developed in New Zealand; initially by the Hamilton Abuse Intervention Pilot Project, launched in 1991, and later by Ken McMaster in conjunction with the National Network of Stopping Violence Services NZ [NNSVS] (National Network of Stopping Violence Services NZ, 1998, p.1; Robertson & Busch, 1993, pp.i & 1).

Figure3: the DAIP Model Power and Control Wheel, illustrates a range of behaviours and tactics men employ against women and children to gain and maintain power and control over them. It is important to note that this model can be helpful, with a little modification, in unpacking power and control in areas such as male-male violence, female-female violence, and female-male violence, if the privilege section is altered to suit. As presented, the model divides power and control tactics into ten categories; physical abuse, sexual abuse, coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, blaming, which also includes minimising and denying, using children, economic abuse and male privilege (for summary see Appendix VIII). The wheel is symbolic in terms of male violence against females in that traditional beliefs and attitudes pertaining to the place and role of women have provided men with certain privileges within society and the family. The *male privilege* section has been repositioned around the outer rim of the wheel¹, thus holding the wheel together to represent the all-pervasive power of these traditional assumptions and the influence that they have in supporting male control and abuse of women.

Sometimes these privileges are labelled as a set of entitlements, beliefs and/or attitudes that provide men with the rationalisations and justifications through which they can maintain an

¹ The Modifications referred to here have been carried out by Paula Basil for NNSVS in 1998.

assumed right to punish, discipline or otherwise abuse and violate women. In other areas of power and control similar entitlements are maintained through the *privilege* that emerges out of corresponding sets of beliefs and attitudes that promote and reinforce hierarchical structures; such as with the rich over poor, old over the young, whites/Europeans over non-whites or minority cultures (see Appendix IX).

Bringing in the Gang Dynamics.

While some of the behaviours outlined in each category of the DAIP Model may be debatable or the meaning and intent of these actions may differ within and across contextual planes, this debate will not be discussed here. The DAIP Model clearly situates these actions within the context of obtaining and maintaining power and control. The purpose here is to explore each section and take into account how the collective dynamics of the gang work to achieve the control of women.

Male Privilege.

Beginning with *male privilege*, as discussed earlier, gangs are structured as male domains in which the men/gang members maintain certain rights or privileges over 'their' women. And like outside the gang context, the use of male privilege operates to limit women's choices or rights and controls women's behaviour. As noted by the women interviewed, women have no place in the decision making of the gang at all and if a woman causes concern for other gang members then her gang member partner is expected to keep her in line. This means that the woman is not merely being held accountable by her partner and maybe his family or friends, she is being held accountable to the whole gang. Furthermore, the women know this and are therefore limited in terms of getting male support when partner abuse occurs. Outside the gang context women in abusive relationships can access support from other males; a brother, or friends within the couple's peer network, but within the gang networks this can prove to be more complicated. More often than not other male gang member friends will not want to challenge their fellow gang members or get involved. Lily, for example, talked about trying to get some support from another gang member when she found out that her partner had been assaulting her child. She explained:

And I came home to my child, bruises all up his legs and um, yeah, I was shattered. ... He [partner's name] was quite a bitter person. Yeah, it was just constant fighting. I found it unacceptable and at that time, we had another gang member staying at our

house and he didn't like that sort of thing either. And I tried to talk to him, to this 'brother' and there was no way. I had to put up with this. Sure he felt sorry for me and the kid but he, you know, to go and talk to my partner about it was, *it was* none of his business.

The gang member's commitment is generally expected to remain more focused towards the gang or his fellow gang members than to family commitments. As Pansy said, "...they won't intervene in personal problems." Family hassles are considered petty and the issue would have to be major before a fellow gang member would get involved. I know from personal experience, however, that child sexual abuse and incest would come under major consideration, but not abusive forms of discipline.

In addition to the above, being accountable to the gang also means being watched and monitored by other women within the gang, and especially the other partners or wives of gang members. This keeping track of *other* women's behaviour is generated from the mistrust that arises out of the men, under the male privilege banner, being entitled to obtain the services or favour of 'dirty girls' whenever they so desire. Most of the women interviewed felt totally powerless in this regard, and although begrudgingly, many came to regard the 'dirty girls' scenario as just another fact of gang life.

Most of the women interviewed discussed in detail many scenarios where other aspects of male privilege could be identified. Some of the reported incidents made it clear that many gang members feel that they have a right to order other gang members' partners around and tended to treat all women within the gang like slaves if they could get away with it. Clearly, there were some limitations to this sort of behaviour, but this depended on the status and the reputation of the woman's partner or her connections within the gang. Both Daff and Lily described incidents where groups of gang members visited their respective private homes and began to make demands or order them around. When their partners made no objection to these actions, the gang members continued to expect these women, their fellow gang members' partners to be at their beck and call. Other women interviewed reported similar scenarios.

When attempting to unpack aspects of male privilege within the gang context, it is easy to see that this underpins all of the other segments within the power and control wheel just as it does in non-gang abusive relationships. Male privilege, for example, extends into physical abuse by supporting the justifications and rationalisations that enable men to punish physically

women who disobey their men. After all, in accordance with traditional gender roles and expectations; man is the leader, protector, and the provider who should be obeyed. And as it has been shown, gang contexts are structured to promote and maintain male privilege and status. Male privilege also supports sexual abuse and gang rape in a similar way. Gang men often take it as their right and in some cases their duty, to have dirty girls while some men, but not all within the gang, regard women as mere sex objects available for male sexual gratification. Male privilege gives men the right to control via whatever means they see fit and therefore all other aspects of the power and control wheel are reinforced by this segment.

Physical Abuse and Violence.

With regards to *physical abuse* against women within the gang context, many incidents were reported throughout the interview process, some by the women, some by the police, and some by male gang associates. Some of these reports cannot be recorded here for reasons of confidentiality. But many of the incidents discussed were enough to make well-seasoned police and workers in the area of violence shudder. And although further research is required to substantiate this, I will argue that the frequency and the extremes of violence from this type of abuse are greater in gangs than in the wider community. Of the ten women interviewed, nine reported extreme violence either against themselves or their friends. So sad and horrendous were the reports involving one young woman, and her children who all grew up in and around a gang, that their subsequent deaths in a non gang-related incident, were considered a real blessing by some who knew her. One said:

That was one of the worst ones. She had to put up with that [violence and abuse] even when she wasn't with him. Realistically, [her death] was the best thing that could have ever, ever happened, as awful as that may sound. The only way she was ever going to get away was [pause] death. She'd have never ever have gotten away. Unfortunately her children went with her, but maybe that's for the best too.

(Thistle, 1998)

This quote illustrates the reality of gang life for some women, and by all accounts this was not an isolated incident. The police also acknowledged this particular case and others like it. While this quote was a reflection of another woman's death, death may be perceived as a viable option for some gang-related women. Two of the women interviewed had attempted suicide and two others had contemplated it. In a discussion paper titled: *Mob Advisory Panel Lower North Island Regions: High Mortality Rate 1994-1995*, there is a mention of five

“female deaths by suicide” (Tam, undated, p.6) in one chapter of the Mongrel Mob over a two-three year time span. Although the data discussed here were not analysed, these deaths, among others, indicate an area of concern for those Mongrel Mob members seeking to encourage Mob chapters towards “Positive Development” (ibid). And like the data presented in this current research the cases indicate a need for more in-depth research in this area, and in the area of gangs overall.

It is not only partner violence that gang women worry about; other gang members are also a threat. Both Violet and Daisy talked about the fear of violence from other gang members, particularly when their partners were absent or had upset the gang. Violet talked about a group of gang members turning up to her home when her partner had upset someone in his gang. She said:

The next thing I had a fist in my mouth and four of the guys got out of the car and stood by the car [and just watched].

And, as previously stated, Daisy talked of other gang members cutting off her hair, and jabbing her with a knife. The women interviewed in this current research spoke of the following with regards to physical assaults against women:

- Major beatings resulting in hospitalisation
- Use of knives, baseball bats, bottles and guns
- Seeing a woman with a gun to held to her head
- Being attacked with an axe
- Being attacked with a machete
- Seeing other women with repetitive black eyes and/or bloodied noses
- Having black eyes and bleeding noses themselves
- Being kicked by a gang member wearing steel caps
- A woman being kicked to death
- Having a knife drawn against one's throat
- Being jabbed in the back with a knife
- Being burned cigarettes
- Having the gang's insignia tattooed on a woman against her will
- Being burned with hot fat
- A woman left paralysed after a beating
- Having hair cut off
- Sustaining broken jaws and/or teeth
- Having to clean up other women after they had been assaulted or raped

- Mother not being able to recognise her daughter due to swelling and the bruising the daughter had sustained
- Being forcibly injected with [an unknown] drug

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it illustrates the everyday type of violence these women endured, which was presented as ‘just a fact of life’ within the gang scene. Besides all this, gang-related women sometimes witness or know about their partner’s involvement in other types of assaults; against other or rival gang members, the narks, and sometimes strangers. An insight into this came from Margaret, a Woman’s Refuge worker:

Margaret remembers working with the de-facto partners of two different gang presidents. One woman moved into refuge after he had ordered a ‘hit’ on another gang house and she knew that women and children lived in this particular house. Margaret states this woman complained that they [gang members] make no allowances for women and the kids when they organised ‘hits’ or retaliation strategies against another gang. She was also concerned that this other gang would retaliate and that her kids, and herself, could be caught up in the middle of it. *“They make no allowances for women and kids.”*

The other woman talked of living in a house, which she owned, next door to a gang house. Her gang member partner and other gang members were often at her house and when the police raided the ‘pad’ one time they also raided her place searching for drugs, weapons and other contraband. The police ripped out wall linings and practically ransacked the place. This woman stated that she felt as though she was “raped by the police,” that she “might as well have been stripped naked.” After they found nothing: no guns, no drugs or anything, they left. She also had a box with personal papers, a diary and other personal effects, which they went through page by page. She felt absolutely devastated by this invasion into her privacy and in the end they found nothing of any value to them. What hurt was that because guns and drugs were allegedly involved they did not need a warrant or anything, the police could just do it. Margaret believes that this girl was too intelligent to leave anything written around that would have left her at risk of harm from the police or from the gang anyway.

The women interviewed also discussed similar scenarios and the overall worry and stress generated in knowing about raids or ‘hits’, of wondering whether the police would turn up at their door, and about the general stress of living within this violence-prone context. Pansy, for example, discussed how hard it was for her being “hassled”, constantly being asked questions, by the police after she and three other women saw a rival gang member being shot. None of these women needed to be told that they knew nothing. Pansy said that the police offered her protection, but she was unable to trust police witness protection programme.

During the course of the interviews there were reports about stress or worry that was related to guns and other weapons being stored at the women's houses. And one woman stopped others calling the police about an assault because she knew a quantity of drugs had been stored at her house by her partner. Two other women discussed having been followed and harassed by rival gang members. These rivals took photographs of them and their houses, and their friends. Each of these women talked about their non-gang-related friends being confronted by rival gang members to be questioned about their association these women's respective partners. Obviously these women were concerned about possible violent outcomes of such events and much caution had to be taken in terms of remaining relatively safe.

The point noted here is that the often gang-related women's behaviour or actions were guided by the events going on around them. And even if they were lucky enough not to have experienced being physically assaulted, they were cautious and tried to prevent such from happening to them and their friends. While women outside the gang context worry about violence and abuse, these concerns are *not generated in the same way* as the gang-related women experience this. Within the gang context violence and abuse is 'just a fact of life'. *All* the women interviewed were well aware of the reality of violence.

I would argue, and most of the women interviewed agree that men within gangs, who use violence and abuse against women, would probably do so whether within the gang or not. As Thistle said:

He would beat me up before he joined the gang. But it happened more often when he was in the gang and he always had a place to go...

It is clear that structure of gangs, the nature of people who are attracted to gangs, and the secrecy that pervades throughout the whole gang system facilitate a greater frequency, and acceptance of extremes in violence and abuse, which the smaller population of gang-related women encounter. Decker and Van Winkle (1996, p.24) state that gang-related violence is often "exaggerated or excessive [in] character", and that this enhances the associated fear or dread.

Today this type of violence is not unchallenged. As mentioned previously, in recent years some gangs have begun to acknowledge the negative consequences of violence against women, as well as in general. The move may have been generated in part by the greater recognition of domestic violence within the wider social arena. As gangs are a part of the wider society, the more open discussion about family violence in general has filtered into the gang context. Some gangs have tried to work towards a better overall social image, with both males and females within the gang context getting older and reflecting on the way their lives have been. Black Power in Wellington admitted, “women have not been cared for in a proper way” (Harris cited in Wane, 1991, p.16) and both the women and men within Black Power began to address the issue with the help of Maori refuge workers. Similarly, some chapters of Highway 61 and the Mongrel Mob have also attempted to make similar changes. Several of the women interviewed, although sceptical to a degree, commented on reforms that have occurred in individual gang chapters that they knew of. Moreover, it also cannot be denied that any change in regard to the treatment of women may in part be motivated by the need to maintain a low public profile to ensure that ‘gang business’ runs smoothly. Domestic disputes or gang rapes draw both the police and public’s attention toward the gangs and this can easily disrupt the ‘business’ side of gang life.

While it is the case that some within the gang cultures seek a better life for themselves and their families, for others violence and abuse are still just facts of life. And Tane, who was connected with gangs on and off for over ten years, said:

It’s sort of like, when that [physical abuse] goes on none of the other men would interfere. They just allow it to continue and, and ah, if other women become agitated by what was happening it would be like, “Mind your own business or you’ll get one too,” type attitude and so there is no resistance to it. And often when this guy had finished with his missus the other women are then able to go and help this woman.

Int.: And fix her up?

Tane: Well, pick her up, take her, go and wash her, clean her up, wash off the blood and take her home um, you know. I used to find it was all quite frightening. But um, like um, yeah, but I was no better to my own partner, yeah. But this is a very long time ago.

Coercion and Threats, Intimidation and Emotional Abuse.

Decker and Van Winkle (1996, pp.20-26) argue that the *role of threat* is central to the origins of, and the continued existence of many gangs. Groups often formed for protection against adversarial groups and in their interactions with other groups, threat has become “a code of the streets” (ibid, p.21). Within the gang, the role of threat increases group solidarity or cohesiveness. In the face of foe, group members depend and rely on each other for support and protection so all members need to conform to the group standards or norms, and dissenters are often brought back into line through coercion and threat. When women are involved in gangs they also are expected to adhere to the norms of the group, if not threat is often imposed.

It is noted that when exploring the power and control strategies of men against women within the gang context, that the use of *coercion and threats, intimidation, and emotional abuse* occur in similar ways to the physical violence. All these tactics of control are generally supported across the gang context and through the collective norms and activity. With *coercion and threats*, for example, any threat or coercive tactic employed by a gang member against his partner, or others for that matter, can be and is often backed up with a simple reminder that he has the gang to call on. Thus the threat often relayed by women outside of the gang context, “If you leave, I’ll track you down and kill you...” (cited in Barnes, 1993, p.6) becomes, ‘If you leave, I’ll track you down and kill you... and you know, *we*’ll find you ’cause there is no where you can hide from *us*’. Furthermore, there is probably a well-rehearsed story about another gang member’s partner who left and was found, which gives more credence to this type of threat.

These threats become all too real when the women know how easy it is for gang members to move through the country with accommodation and costs at a minimum and, depending on the status of the gang members concerned, that they can get the bunnies, or prospects to do the searching for them. Similarly, these women know that the easy access and availability of guns for gang members is real. Again this sort of information actually strengthens the threat and reinforces its power. Gang-related women do not doubt that this sort of backup from the gang is real. Comment of this topic was presented as follows:

Thistle: It doesn't matter how staunch the man is. You watch them go to the pub and there's a fight. It's not one on one. It's, "Hey bros, come here. This guy's pissing me off," and they'll go over. The backup's *always* there.

Pansy: They know you are not going to just pack your bags and go. You haven't got just one to fight against, you have got the whole lot. ... I think there are threats for everybody's family too. You know, it could be the sister or the brother or the parents. ... I was scared for my family. I had gone home once, I ran home the first time to try and get away. *They* [gang members] smashed up my family's house. Never again! ... It doesn't matter where you go or what you do, there are too many of them, they're everywhere. Wherever you go in New Zealand, they are just everywhere. You can't hide. ... And all their little flunkeys are doing all their dirty work, the bigger ones, and the older ones get them too. It's the younger ones that are getting into all the trouble, and it's getting worse. I know it's getting worse.

Lily: I'll say it's having the other guys there. If you try and run away you have to watch out for any gang member, not just your partner. Any member that's in a car or along the street because he's [your partner] gonna find out and track you down, because he's got more people out there to watch out for you, yeah. ... He was hunting me down and was going through those gang members.

Police and other workers in the area of violence do not underestimate the power and the strength of these threats and likewise, acknowledge the ability of gangs to find people. Police gang liaison officers made the following comment:

One of the things that we talked about was the intelligence network. Gangs are very big on that. So if you are trying to break away, gangs have an ability to find out things that individuals [individual men outside the gang context] just can't find out. Um, trying to break away from an abusive [non-gang] partner, then there are only so many things that that person can do to try and track the woman down. But with the gangs, people who are in that scene will tell them because they are scared of the [gang members] and they will find out a lot more about the defacto or partner who is trying to get away. It's that fear, it's such a part of the gang life. When these gang members threaten people they are not too fussed about who they threaten, they will go to extended family members and things like that.

(Det. Stokes, 1998)

And Detective Neale (1998) shudders, having discussed a scenario he encountered in which a woman had upset a particular gang. He said:

They [gang members] get very hurt if a female associate pulls the wool over their eyes. ... Um, they were very hurt to think that that [incident involving the woman] had happened and I wouldn't like to be in her shoes if they ever catch up with her.

Is catching up with this woman or other gang-related women likely? Both Detective Neale and Detective Stokes have been reported recently in the media, with regards to the gangs' sophisticated intelligence systems (see *Press*, 7 Nov. 1998; Andrae, 1998, p.60). The following exert was reported in the *Press*, 7 Nov. 1998:

Christchurch gangs are crack researchers and able to find information on almost anyone, says Christchurch's gang liaison police officer. ... Detective Neale said gangs compiled dossiers and photos of their enemies – mostly people in other gangs. ... They were very good at using publicly available information – from telephone books, electoral rolls and car registration numbers – to track people down. "They're not as good as police at getting information. But they're pretty good."

Similarly, women interviewed never underestimated the power of the gangs, as collective entities. And the general public do not underestimate this power either. In terms of their ability to *intimidate*, gang members, drawing on their collective power, have proven themselves to be masters.

During the later part of 1997, a number of gang-related trials around the country had been stymied under the threat of gang intimidation towards the victims and/or witnesses involved. Notably, the South Island's Road Knights became well known for their intimidatory behaviours, as did Black Power with the killing of Crown witness Christopher Crean. New legislation to counter the gangs' ability to intimidate witnesses was given high priority and rushed through Parliament (see Appendix II; *Press*, 20 March 1998; *Press*, 25 March 1998; *Sunday-Star Times*, 26 Oct. 1997). While it is not only the gangs that employ these kinds of scare tactics, the gangs' intimidatory practices have been well publicised through the media and this gives an appreciation of the personal impact; the fear, the worry and the uncertainty generated which has been experienced by the women interviewed. Furthermore, these women have developed a greater knowledge of the gang practices and are able to read the more subtle forms of intimidation, which may not be seen as such by those outside the gang context or by the police for that matter. In other words, the threat does not have to be spelt out clearly to be understood. Comments in this regard went as follows:

Thistle: I've been told the stories, I mean of what it used to be like down here too. I mean I remember [name] explaining that the bar area used to be the blocking room [place where gang rapes took place].

Thistle: He invited the gang along to my 21st. We had invited a few gang members and they arrived without their patches etc. But he [partner] invited all these others and they arrived with their bikes and their patches of course. And that was an, "I'll do what I fuckin' like woman!" It was his way of getting the point across. Like, "If you don't play ball with me, then I'll make your life miserable."

Jasmine: ...they just stand over women and just go, "Well, you be here to pick up the money at ten o'clock. *You had better be here!*" I thought, "That's a bloody threat if I ever heard one!" And that's not intimidating to some people, but it just freaked me out. I thought, "Oh shit, here we go again."

When gang-related women have heard about or witnessed serious violence, it does not take much for the message to get across. All of the examples present the possible consequences of 'stuffing up'. And it is not just the words as such that take on the meaning here, it was the tone of voice, the look, and/or the accompanying body language that conveys the sinister meaning. In terms of the gang context, these intimidatory threats do not necessarily have to come from the woman's partner. Each of the above quotes was related to situations in which other gang members were doing the intimidating.

As with intimidation, *emotional abuse* can be really obvious or it can be employed in an indirect manner. Some gang members use forms of emotional abuse similar to those used by men outside the gang context. For example, Freesia said:

He used to put me down and if I talked to people I'd get the bash. If you are told often enough that this is what you are then you start believing that's what you are. I was a psycho, a slut, and a whore. You name it I was it.

The effects of emotional/psychological abuse are well known and need little documentation here. What needs to be considered with the gang context, however, is that it is not only the woman's partner who resorts to using emotionally abuse tactics. Often other gang members will do the same as will the other women connected with the gang. Freesia, also said:

The more negative side was the rape and getting the bash. It's just how women are treated. And you know, the backstabbing and abuse from the women.

Another aspect of interest is that some women, who had associations with a different gang, either in a past relationship or through family connections, found that their partners tended to put them down because of this connection. The following saying, used in more than one

interview, conveys an underlying message, which may be perceived differently from person to person, or gang to gang. In general the quote implies that one's connection with another group/gang brings some form of contamination with it.

If you lie down with dogs, you get fleas.

This sort of emotional abuse occurs as an aspect of gang life when particular gang members consider their gang superior to all other gangs. And while connections with some other gangs may be tolerated, women from, or who have connections with rival gangs are known to experience this type of abuse. Like racial/cultural put downs and degradation, this sort of abuse draws heavily on the perceived differences between the groups. Lily reported difficulties that she had regarding her family being associated with a different gang. Not only did her family disown her because they did not like her associating with her partner's gang, she also had nowhere to go if she decided to leave. This was because her partner would stalk her and organise 'hits' against this other gang knowing that she would worry about her extended family and return before any real harm was done. As will be detailed later, her partner's actions prevented her from leaving for a considerable time. She did not want to feel responsible for an all-out gang war. In many ways, Lily soon became totally isolated with little avenue to source support.

Isolation.

With regards to *isolation and isolating tactics*, many of the gang-related women interviewed talked about how isolated they had become while they were associated with the gang. Factors that generate isolation occur on a number of levels and are *not* solely the gang members doing. When gang members isolated their partners from family, friends and other support systems it occurred in a similar fashion to the way men isolate their partner's outside the gang context. That is, they controlled whom their partner saw and talked to, and they controlled what their partner did. They limited the woman's outside involvement in other activities, clubs and so forth.

Over a period of time some gang-related women find themselves totally isolated from the outside community and this is more likely to occur when there has been a breakdown within the woman's family of origin for whatever reason. Daff, Thistle, Rhodo, and Jasmine held stronger family ties than some of the other women interviewed and where these ties provided

a means of support, even limited support, the women were able to curb the degree of isolation that occurred. For example, Daff maintained a strong relationship with her family and she acknowledged always having an independent streak about her. This provided her with the means to separate herself from much of the happenings within the gang scene and gave her avenues for support. Thistle also maintained links with her friends outside the gang and they gave her support and advice from time to time. This support, she claimed, helped her make some changes in her life and prevented her from becoming too deeply entrenched within the gang culture.

For women who did not have, or were unable to maintain links with others outside the gang, gang life became a total way of living. The women interviewed said:

Thistle: A lot of men isolate their women from everyone. Gang members can have as many 'families' as they want and it doesn't matter. Their big bikie family, and the drugs, the alcohol, anything that they want. [Partner's name] wouldn't let me leave.

Jasmine: It's like with everyone else. It takes a period of time. It's like a dripping tap, after a while you get used to it. I mean like, little bit by little bit. I donno, and you become dependent...

Ransy: I couldn't trust anyone, not at that time. Your best friend can stab you in the back. They [gang members] go around all you friends or people that you mingle with. And they hassle your family. No, I was very much alone.

Rose: It's the power behind the gang, you know. Like if you belong to a gang and you want out, you can't get out really. Well that's what they make you believe. But you can't get out and it's like if you do get out and you spill your guts [talk] well you will be tracked down, you know. And there is a real fear attached to that. It's like; "Who do I tell?" I mean they might have affiliations, you know it's very scary. You are alone.

Daff: They [some gang women] just get down trodden more and more, get hooked into their belief system. ... I just see it as a code that they live by. It would be hard for them to shake anyway. ... It's so ingrained, the code for women, that it's hard to come outside that code, to step outside that code and say well, "I will go and get help." I feel that you just get so caught up in it all that you don't know how, for a start, to get help, um for those who are deeply into it, that is.

Freesia: The isolation, you are really isolated.

So how does this isolation occur? It is apparent that many of the women who become entrenched within gang systems start off with a shattered or vulnerable sense of self and little in the way of support networks. This may be a consequence of problems within the family of

origin, childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence, drug and alcohol related issues, neglect and/or rejection and so forth, or some other traumatic experience during adolescence such as being gang raped. Add to this the violence prone context of the gang, hefty doses of bullyboy tactics, physical assaults, coercion and threats, emotional abuse and further degradation, and soon, these women become unsure, their self-esteem diminishes further, they become fearful and more isolated. This can then make them dependent on and more entrenched within the gang environment.

There are other factors that contribute to the overall isolation of gang-related women. The first, already discussed, is that gang-related women find it difficult to talk to each other about what is happening to them. As Rose indicated, even your best friend can turn on you and disclose the information to someone else, and in the tight-knit community of the gang the chances of your partner, or other gang members finding out, is high. Plus, the distinction between the different types of women adds to the situation and further reduces trust. And as described earlier some of these men worked to keep the women isolated from each other. Jasmine was quick to remind us of the “old divide and rule” tricks: create mistrust and conflict amongst the women, then the focus of attention is shifted away from the men’s abusive control tactics. This process ensures that women remain wary of each other and reduces the chance of a collective response from them.

In terms of isolation, there is a need to reflect on the wider community’s response towards both gangs and, in particular, towards the women involved in gangs. In New Zealand, gangs have been icons of the criminal world in many respects. For many, they represent the epitome of crime, violence and all that is evil. Gang members and their associates have become scapegoats, beyond compassion and empathy. Instead of understanding they experience social wrath and reprimand. Tougher and longer terms of imprisonment are called for and the ‘throw away the key’ attitude prevails across society. The politics surrounding crime and the role of the media in perpetuating these images tend to skew attention away from other criminal sectors, especially the whitecollar criminal fraternity whose activities cause greater social and personal devastation. Added to this are all the negative stereotypes that have been generated and attached to the label of ‘gang women’, which present these women as wild aggressive tomboys, or sex loving wayward girls whose lives are beyond any rehabilitation.

The subsequent stigma and social wrath, which gang women are well aware of, also works to isolate gang-related women from supports within the wider community and reduces the avenues for assistance in times need. As some of women interviewed explained:

Thistle: We still got named, labelled as such, you know. "Oh, there goes a [Black Power, a Mob, or a Highway] woman" or whatever, even if we didn't consider ourselves too bad. Even when I wasn't with him [partner] we were still 'gang women'.

Lily: I found that they [outsiders] could not be trusted for support. Like she [a counsellor] appeared to think, "She asked for it, she knew what she was getting herself into, so she'll just have to deal with it." I found that attitude with my family as well and with other outsiders.

Daisy: There's you already isolated enough, you are feeling bad and so you reach out for help. They [outsiders] say that they want to help but they don't understand. They don't understand where you are coming from and what you have been doing. They are often coming from a headspace.

Many of the women interviewed reflected on feeling misunderstood by social service workers, and that such workers often conveyed a certain level of cautiousness-come-fear when dealing with gang-related women. Considering the recent bouts of gang intimidation highlighted in the media in late 1997 and early 1998, this cautiousness is arguably justified. Generally, the women interviewed revealed, it was a shocked or horrified look, a glance of disbelief, a visible edginess and/or direct or indirect referrals to the police and the Family Court for assistance, which conveyed the lack of understanding and unease. Two women reported that they were criticised by social services for becoming involved with gang situations and they were told that they were more-or-less on their own as no one would want to get involved.

These sorts of experiences merely work to reinforce gang-related women's perceptions that they are indeed on their own and intensify the degree of isolation and powerlessness that they feel. Thus the factors that isolate some gang-related women are multi-faceted. The men generate isolation in their personal relationships in the same way that some men outside the gang tend to do. But at the level of the gang, this isolation becomes more complicated with other gang members and other women within the gang scene playing a role in facilitating isolation. Some women internalised the gang culture and have become so used to the status quo that it is difficult to even imagine life away from the gang. The social rejection and

stigmatisation of gang members and associates add to this isolation. And the women themselves, knowing the way they are seen by the public, become resistant to asking for assistance.

Economic Abuse, Using Children and Blaming/Minimising Tactics.

Aspects of *economic abuse*, *using children* and *using blaming, minimising or denying tactics* were mentioned during the interviews. And while these tactics did not receive as much coverage in the interviews as physical, sexual or emotional abuse and isolation they are worthy of consideration here because they give a greater understanding of the overall picture.

Economic abuse in general refers to the way some men limit their partners' access to the family income, and in some cases to the women's own personal income. This is achieved through a number of methods including; stopping or making it difficult for the wife/partner to find employment or maintain employment. Sometimes men limit women's access to family income by spending large sums on personal extravagances such as motorbikes or cars and so forth. This often means that the woman's income is absorbed to finance family outgoings such as power, phone, clothing and food for the children. Much of the comment from the women interviewed demonstrated this:

Thistle: I was an easy money supply for him as well. And there's no two ways about that.

Pansy: I *had* to stop work.

Freesia: I went to work and he stayed home....

And, on a slightly different level:

Violet: ...I'm supposed to feed him or put a roof over their [partner and other gang member's] heads or do their washing... and um, the thing was said to me was that they would look after me. ... I don't want no gang members looking after me or my kids. I'll look after myself. There's always a payback time. There are always payback days. There always was. I'd stand back and say, "But we don't owe them! Why do we owe them?" Most of the money would come from me and I would have to fix up all his deals and that. We have given them more than they ever gave us. And yeah, I had to pay out to save me from getting smashed over from him and all because he didn't own up to something and was gonna get smashed.

While Violet talked about having to pay up on her partner's behalf, Thistle reflected on another gang woman's disclosure to her. Thistle said:

I worked with a woman whose partner was with [a gang] and he came here to resit his patch, which had been taken off him. He owed money to the club, so he gave her body for them to use. He put her on the block [for gang rape] and by the time they had finished with her, you know, his debt was cleared. I said, "What!" And she said, "Well, I suppose you do these things for love."

These last two quotes are gang specific and while they may be difficult for outsiders to understand, the other women interviewed had heard similar stories. Some commented that a woman in such a situation merely did what she had to do for survival: pay up or give it up.

The police commented similar scenarios that mostly pertained to gang-related drug debts. It is known that both young males and females with such drug debts have been made to sell drugs on behalf of gang members. Detective Neale (1998) stated:

Um, they operate, the gang will go and get a house, a rental property and they'll set these people up and operate them in shifts. That place they will operate until the police get a search warrant and this lot is arrested. And that obviously insulates the gang members. Um, those persons, the teenagers are arrested and charged and some of them have been doing jail time for first offences.

And with regards to young women, in particular, Detective Neale said:

Some 14 to 16 year-olds are operating as prostitutes and are being run by [gangs]. However, when we say that they are being run by the [gangs], it's *not* the gang itself, but members of the gang who have capitalised on this and it is their money making enterprise as opposed to the gang telling them to go and do it.

Detective Neale also made comment about some women serving time in jail on behalf of their men. He said:

I'm just casting my mind back over who has just recently gone to jail as far as de-facto or partners of gang members are concerned. I can think of four in the last 12 months who are probably in jail at the moment. One of them in particular was involved in a major drug deal and others were drug suppliers on behalf of the gang. However, there are court cases pending where there are partners of gang members, partners of [a gang] who will be going to jail for drug dealing offences. But it is always the same when these particular gang members will not stand and put their

hands up and say that the drugs were theirs. They'll let their partners go to jail. Then you have got the situation where those particular patched members have to look after the children. Um and I think one of the reasons why they let their defacto partners put their hands up is because of the children. Because um, they [women] as caregivers of the relationship, the likelihood of them going to jail is pretty remote, but it is happening more than it used to.

Neale's personal views acknowledge that some gang members use disparities in gender within the justice system to their own or their family's advantage. These men, informed by their lawyers or through life experience, have come to learn that women with dependent children to care for are less likely than men to receive a jail term when convicted for particular offences. And in some cases, as recent research suggests, women may be given special consideration with regards to their child caring role (Jeffries and Newbold, 1999, pp.11-12, 25). Furthermore, when gang members end up in jail themselves, often the women are expected to carry on with their partner's work. The drug dealing does not stop; some women may simply take over. As Detective Neale commented:

It's their income that we are talking about. We are not talking about drug dealing because they want to supply them per se; they are actually living off it. They are used to a certain source of income and when that stops they, some women have to pick it up and run with it. They also supply their partners while they are in jail. He's used to a certain income and if he doesn't get it all hell breaks loose. So they [the women] are in a 'catch 22 situation' really. They have to keep it going whether they want to or not.

As can be seen, women's economic dependency within the gang context can lead some gang-related women towards criminal activity, although it is not denied by me or any of those interviewed that a few gang-related women are active criminals in their own right. What needs to be understood here is that the gang culture itself makes women's co-participation in criminal activity more likely than in some other areas of our society. Women who are beneficiaries of the proceeds of crime become indirectly entangled in that way of life and with regards to economic abuse, co-participation may not be a matter of personal choice on the woman's part. Research by Laura Fishman (1987, pp.176-204), who held in-depth interviews with 30 women whose partners/husbands had served at least six months in two Vermont correction facilities, found that women are likely to become co-participants in crime for a number of reasons. She stated:

For some, coparticipation was an accommodative strategy, demonstrating their loyalty and love to their husbands and hence was helpful in preserving the marriage. Those who use drugs, in particular, reported that the whole process of securing money, finding drug connections, and getting high brought them and their men “closer together.” A few wives reported that they were involved in crime for immediate tangible reasons – money and material goods – needed to support their households or drug habits. One woman asserted that she forged checks primarily for economic reasons. ... Three wives in the study population hesitantly and reluctantly engaged in their husbands’ fast-living and criminal activities under threats of physical harm. ... This strategy is then a compromise, used to prevent further verbal and physical abuse and thus to make life more bearable.

(Fishman, 1987, pp.199, 200-201)

Some gang-related women make similar compromises and whether by choice or not, co-participation in crime becomes a viable option when the consequences of not doing so are further assaults, more abuse, and humiliation. Violet, Pansy and Jasmine all reflected on such aspects of gang life even though criminality was not a targeted area under focus in this research. Economic crisis; owing money to the gang or drug related debts, the lack of financial support from their gang member partners and fear were all factors that led some gang-related women to crime. Women’s reactions and accommodations to their partner’s criminal activity is an under researched area and more studies need to be undertaken. From discussions with the women in this study, it appears as though women’s financial dependency on gang members and the men’s economically abusive tactics may play a significant role in the gang women’s involvement or co-participation in crime.

Moving from the theme of economic abuse to *using children*, it was noted that all the women interviewed commented that they were worried about how their involvement had impacted on their children. Sometimes this concern focused on aspects of personal violence and abuse, at other times the concern centred on the impact of gang life in general. While this theme was not elaborated on in detail, it became clear that put downs about parenting skills or poor motherhood, and the relaying of messages through the children and so forth were similar to those used by many men outside the gang context. However, Daff said:

He associated with them [gang members] outside of the home, he never brought them back because that’s not what I wanted. That’s not what I wanted for the kids. I did not want them growing up with them as their role models. I wanted them to have a normal type of life rather than be brought up in something that I didn’t feel was above board anyway. ... The only time I know that he took them down there was when we separated and he used to take the three kids down there, regular. And it just used to throw me into a spin. But the more I used to jump up and down and

say, "Don't take them down there," the more he used to do it. I guess I used to worry for the kids because they were so young then and were at an impressionable age. And I didn't want them growing up with their ideas, um. It's the way they treated the women. That it is okay to be violent, it was okay to have, um activities going on that involved women in an underhand way. I remember the eldest saying to me that um, they went down there one Saturday and they were sitting down on this seat because they had been told to sit on this seat. And so, they sat on this seat and all of a sudden somebody else would come along and say, "Get off that seat." And so they would stand over in a corner and then somebody else would say to them, "Don't stand there, go over there." And they would. I don't know, I get the feeling that they were *tested*, that they were testing these kids to see if they would do what they wanted them to do and I didn't like that. Um, 'cause kids will do what they are told. And like their father was there, but he wasn't in control of them once he took them down there. Everybody else seemed to take over the management of the kids and I just didn't like that, 'cause they were mine. And, I mean, they would be too scared to move from one place to another.

Daff's concern was that the children who were often at gang houses were slowly being trained and tested, not by their father, but by other gang members so that gradually they conformed to the gang culture. Hesitantly, Jasmine reflected:

Ah shit, I don't even like to think, I don't like to assume but I will. You don't fit, you don't fit in this world, you know, it's either you or this world. I mean that's the first thing. And the world's wrong and you're right. So anything that society tells you is good for you is not okay. I'd say it would be teaching young people that society's values really aren't for them and they don't work, in every sense of the word, I'd say.

But Violet spoke about the impact on her children, she said:

Your kids, they experience and they are still going through it. I never had this, why should my kids have to go through this. They don't need this. I am putting them through something that I've never been through, that I never went through. Why should they go through it? It's the kids and you want more for them and you are not going to get more for them sitting in that situation, you know, with the drugs and all that. You know it. You go through all this shit. ... I said to him, "Did you ever once think about these kids, and what these kids are thinking?" The youngest one "Are you mad at daddy. Well don't talk to daddy." You know, it's not for our kids to say.

Violet knew that her children were hurting, she had seen them begin to model the violence and abuse that she had seen. She knew that the cycle of violence was beginning to repeat itself through her children. Like other women interviewed, Violet was terribly worried about her children and their futures. And as will be demonstrated later, the effects of gang life on the

children was a primary factor for many of the women when it came to their decision to leave gang life behind.

Moving on to *blaming, minimising and denying tactics*, there is ample illustration of these tactics throughout other parts of this thesis and it is enough to reiterate that these tactics merely shift the responsibility for violence and abuse away from the perpetrator and on to the victim, some other person or substance such as, alcohol or drugs. The point to note with regards to the gang context is that it is not simply the male partner and possibly his family and friends who attempt to shift responsibility away from the perpetrator/s for choosing to use violence and abuse. Within the gang context these tactics, the excuses, justifications and minimisations, are employed by most of those involved in the gang community. For example, when women do not fit in with the gangs' expectations the women are blamed for any abuse that comes their way. The men, who sometimes acknowledge the abuses, accuse the women concerned for placing them in a position where they have 'had to' use violence or abuse. As Tane explained:

Well, here's an example, this woman I saw she was in a car and she was backing the car up and um, the passenger's door was open and she backed it into a lamppost and tore it off its hinges. So this guy walks around and hauls her out of the car and beats her over. And the attitude, from the group of men around them was um, "It serves the stupid bitch right". That was the attitude. ... Um, I think that it's like this. If you are brought up in an environment where there is violence all around you um, then that level of violence is normal. Then as an adult you have that normal level of violence and then it becomes grosser, because it deteriorates. You know what I mean? So I think back to some of the women I saw in that sort of situation and what sorts of women that they were, part of the attitude is when women were being dealt to, is that women brought it on themselves. It was their own fault.

Furthermore, other women within the gang context tend to support the rationalisations by also blaming the women concerned, although they may feel a compassion for the woman involved. The following quote sums up this situation.

Um, after the first hiding that I got from my partner um, it became sort of every week. I'd get a hiding every time that he got really drunk um, and then it got up to every three or four days where I'd have a black eye, or a blood nose or was smacked around or something. And so, inside I felt, you know it really really hurt, but on the outside it was no different to what everybody else [other women] were going through. ... Every once in a while um, when it came to other people getting a hiding and sort of coming home and there is somebody [a woman] getting blocked in your kids room, you know after the guys have had a meeting and stuff like that. I'd get

angry about it, but there wasn't a whole lot that I could do really, and um, I'd sort of, you know, leave the house or sort of go out and wait till everybody had finished and basically go in and clean up the mess afterwards. ... Um, when I was getting hidings all the time - *my belief systems have changed now* - but I used to just believe and thought things, as I wanted. I sort of made up my own rules in my own head, you know, just to survive.

(Anonymous by request).

For most of the women interviewed, minimising, blaming and denying was a survival tactic which enabled them to cope with the situation in which they were then entwined. One of the most difficult forms of violence to minimise was gang rape. And as a power and control tactic the mere possibility of gang rape had a powerful influence on all the women spoken to in this study. As such, it could be deemed the ultimate in power and control.

The Threat of Gang Rape.

All of the women interviewed discussed gang rape, and while some acknowledged that such has been banned in some of the gangs, their comments indicated that the threat of gang rape still influenced the women's actions and the choices that they made. Again it is better to let the women speak for themselves. Comment on gang rape went as follows:

Daisy: I know one time when I was, it was earlier on with my partner, and he was away for the weekend. About four or five of his chapter turned up to our house knowing that he was away and one of them said to me, "Ah well, we have heard things about you," and such in such. And um, they sort of locked the door behind them. I ran into my room, locked the door and pushed the dressing tables and things up against it. They were kicking in the door and things like that. And then another chapter turned up and, you know, if they had have been sprung, you know, with this gang member's missus doing what they were trying to do. Well yeah, that would have just started up a big war. And I think we all knew, women just knew, that being a partner of a gang member themselves, well hopefully... You know, the way they used the dirty girls, hopefully it wouldn't happen to us.

There were a couple of occasions when I knew someone [a woman] was being set up. There was a few times when the other women actually set the girls up to be blocked. Um, they usually had something personally against the woman and once it was misinterpreted information and I knew that this girl was innocent of what she had been accused of. And so I did speak to her and sort of let her know what was happening. No one said anything about me letting her know um, that, that was what was happening.

Rhodo: I never knew it was happening. There was one time when one girl was there and I think she might have been mentally handicapped but as far as I know she was willing, at that time. And I didn't question it.

Another time, it was at the end of '83. When that happened um, we were in [another city] and we had just got married. They used a pool cue on this lady. Yeah, I was glad that he [partner] wasn't there. And quite honestly, he um, I just felt he was innocent, that he didn't get into a lot of that stuff. Whether I was right or wrong, I know now that I was probably wrong, believing that but ah. It wasn't something I wanted to believe. Yeah, plus he would have led me to believe that too.

Jasmine: Now, well about two years ago, I know women who have been sent out to set other women up to be gang raped. Three times in the last year, and that's not gossip either, it's factual (*huff*). They set one another up and they use women to do that.

Pansy: Yeah, well at the same time there was that murder. But I think it was that someone had either dobbed someone in or said something that they should not have said, and to an outsider. I seen gang rapes where they have made the children watch while their mother had been raped.

Int: And that was because she had dobbed or opened her mouth when she shouldn't?

Pansy: That's right. That's right. Yeah. I know it is going on. I know cause it's the reason that [child's father], I know it's the reason that he left. He's actually pulled out and it was through the rape of the women that he pulled out. He was contracted till he was 45 so I know dam well that it is still going on. ... And those guys grabbed me and they took me and they hanged me from the ceiling and brutally raped me. And, yeah, they raped me.

Rose: I went to this party with this girl. She was a Maori girl, a friend of my girlfriend. You know, a very pretty girl, about the same age. Um, I went to this party and I didn't know what was going on. I didn't! People say, I've heard people say, "Ooh, but women know, they know when they are going to be gang raped. They know", you know, and I thought that is not always true. Anyway I went to this party and these guys started to strip off their clothes and um they started on this girl. And um, one would have sex with her from the rear and the other one would have oral sex with her at the same time, you know, at the same time. ... Well it was right in front of me. Yeah, I was sitting on this chair and I was too scared to move. Anyway they did all sorts of things. They stuck the beer bottle up her vagina and they said, "We can't see the blood dripping down." So they stuck a lemonade bottle up. I was really, really scared to move. ... But I was sitting there watching all this stuff and I wanted to get out of there and I couldn't, you know.

I just thought those men were animals actually. Quite frankly, that's what I thought. I never, I didn't know people carried on that way. I didn't. And I was angry because she was a woman. She was out of it on something though. And I had heard before that she had previously been gang raped, yeah gang raped and she seemed to say that she liked it, you know. And I felt sorry for her. I felt angry with them and I felt sorry for her. ... I didn't do anything because I was scared. It's a matter of survival, really. I did not want the same thing to happen to me. And I knew it would.

Daff: I went to, actually I did go to a do once, just before we separated and it was run by the [gang]. Um, and it was a good do and I really enjoyed myself. And I wanted to go to the toilet, but there was a queue outside the women's toilet and I thought, "Oh, bugger this!" 'cause the men's toilet was right next door and there was nobody waiting and so I just went in there. And there was quite a few of them in there including the President. And I just walked passed and went to the loo. I came out and went to wash my hands and I saw the President looking at some of the others and shaking his head [a no shake] at some of the other members. And I thought, "Oops, I'm very lucky," and just walked out. Now I guess it would have been whom you were right at the very time whether you got the *no* or the *yes*. Thankfully, I got the *no*, and I just walked out. But somebody else, somebody that they didn't know they probably got the nod and it probably would have been 'goodnight'.

Int: You mean somebody could have got the bash or what?

Daff: Oh, I don't think they would have got the bash, they would have been put on the 'block', and nobody would have gone in 'cause you were in the men's loo. So I think, yeah....

Lily: Hmm, Hmmm, rape is very, very degrading. The abuse is degrading. Gosh, if I knew that there was a woman being set up for 'the block' the first thing that I wanted to do was to get him [partner] away. I mean, he's got me. Why should he be in there with those guys? Um, but it's just, yeah, a lot of the time I was told to, "Get home," and I'd be really angry. By the time he'd get home I'd 'nut off', yeah, and end up getting a hiding. Yeah, but I had to let it out and after a while you just don't trust any woman, in there, in that room.

Violet: One time over in Aussie. ... I think it is over there, and a girl had been gang raped over there. I sort of didn't know what was going on at first, until I got home and the guys did get together to pull it off. It was the wannabes, sort of thing you know, not their members, but personally myself I just can't stand rape. Not with what I've gone through sort of thing. I can't.

Freesia: I did see that once and um, I didn't like it cause of what I went through. I tried to help and I got pulled away by my partner and then I was dragged away, got 'the bash', that sort of thing. I felt really rat shit because I had been through that myself. And there was nothing I could do, you know.

It got to a stage where it just built up inside of me. I got to a stage after seeing it, and experiencing it that I just said, "I'm outta here. I am out of here," and I did.

And the conversation with Thistle and Briar went as follows:

Thistle: Yeah, things happened while we were there and when we weren't, *but not to us*.

Briar: The women who were down there....

Thistle: Like slutting, all they wanted was a guy with a patch on his back and ah....

Briar: [A woman's] hiding was like that. She was just standing at the bar late one night and one drunk guy who had had a bad day came up and started beating the living shit out of her. Another mate of ours, who was actually patched too, pulled her out, but he was the only one who went to help. This other guy was going to kick her head in. She was not slutting about much at all. She's still got stitch marks and scars around here [points to face and around the left eye].

Thistle: Birthday parties were good. But yeah, nothing like that happened to us.

Briar: So it happened but it didn't happen to us.

Int.: When the woman got beaten like that, was she on the block?

Thistle: No, she was raped by two guys. If anything that should tell you that you are in a loose place, you know, get out.

Int.: Why don't women pick that message up then?

Thistle: Probably because they don't want to at the time, they may be having a good time.

Briar: I was never worried for myself when I went down there.

Thistle: No, we were lucky really. We had a few of the older members that would watch out for us really. And there is even long time ladies who would find it hard, who will probably never get out of the scene and even most of them have slept their way through the club. All the older women, I've heard, I mean most of them started out on the block for the club and ended up with them. What about [so and so's] wife? That guy [name] dealed her out. He raped her. I've seen him around too. Most of them are like that though from back in that era [referring to the late 1970s - 1980s].

Int.: What was the worst thing that ever heard happened to a woman?

Thistle: Men deal the woman out. Block her and raped her. Remember the one where the bottle goes up and it broke.

And one woman, who wishes to remain anonymous, said

And on another occasion when another girl was getting blocked in um, [this was obviously hard for the woman to say] it was happening in my home. And one of the girls was in there and um I did ask my partner. He was not interested in what was sort of going on at the time and he was sort of spewing a bit that it was happening in our home. He just went in there and told everyone to fuck-off, so to speak, and told everyone to take their shit somewhere else. And um, but in doing that he had to

show some kind of disrespect for this girl also. And in doing that, he sort of got the scissors and chopped her hair off and beat her you know. He was just doing something to show the boys, yep you know, "I'm into this too," you know, hurting this girl also, but to get her out of here, sort of thing. And if he hadn't of done something like that the boys wouldn't have taken him so seriously.

That freaked me out. That was, I mean, I'm not saying that it was okay for what he was doing to me, but seeing him do that to somebody else just sort of like, did something to me. To see somebody else who was already being raped, and then seeing my partner do something like that, yeah it just really sickened me, but then again if he hadn't of done that. This is the way I sort of thought, you know, it wouldn't have stopped for her.

And discussion on gang rape with Tane went like this:

Tane: They were junior members. Yeah, I mean it was kinda flawed because ah, um of the attitudes of the person who was in control. They were negative. For example, these junior [members] were talking about how a policewoman had been gang raped in Hastings and um, the head guy said, "She probably loved it." And, I said that I thought that was really appalling. So like um, he was so focused on anti-Pakeha, anti-system and um whether the story was true or not, I don't know, but one of the things I learned about these guys is that they brag a lot. It was like um, individually they were just kids, but when they got together as a group they became something else. And um, I felt that in that situation he was focusing on the wrong thing. He was focusing on how a Pakeha policewoman got dealt to rather than um, the actual incident.

Int.: I'd like to explore gang rape a bit more?

Tane: I've seen that sort of thing goes on in shearing gangs as well.

Int.: Yeah, I know, it goes on in rugby, or league clubs, at times also. But I am interested in the gang process because I have read some theoretical writings on gang rape outside of gangs, fraternity gang rape in America.

Tane: Uh ha.

Int.: In one case it was implied that gang rape had homosexual connotations, as a homophobic way of men connecting to each other but using one woman as a means to do that².

Tane: Yeah, I see what you are saying. I think that no gang member would admit that he wants to 'backstab' his brother, his bro, but there is that sense of unity um. This is pretty crude, but it's like, "Hey bros, we are all now cock-related through that bitch."

² See Blanchard, 1959, p.259. Although Blanchard concluded that gang rape is not obviously homosexual I used reference to this work hoping to expand the discussion on this topic.

Int.: Okay, but that's not in the sense of making love to each other, it's a way of strengthening the unity or bond between them?

Tane: Hmm, hmm, yeah. I've never seen a gay gang member drinking in the [name of gang].

Int.: In terms of bonding, does this comes out of the rape being a crime and that they know it is a crime and that they have shared in something that must be kept to themselves?

Tane: Except they boast amongst themselves about it.

Int.: How do they talk about it or justify it?

Tane: Um, I don't know. It's like, I know of one situation where a woman was put on the block um, but she was considered to be loose anyway. *That's not my attitude!* I met this woman and she had been put on the block, but she had been going with different guys all the time anyway. So she was called a slut, she was promiscuous um, old guys, young guys, and you know, at parties, with lots of guys all the time.

Int.: And was that considered her consent?

Tane: Yeah. Now um, I talked with one woman, years ago. I had just come back from a holiday in [a rural area] and she said, "Yeah, I went to [same rural area] and five [gang members] did me." And ah, what happened to her was that they grabbed hold of her out of a car park in a pub and dealt to her in the back of one of their cars. ... Uhh mm, that's a kind of bonding amongst the guys cause they have committed a crime together. ... I've been in a car with six other guys, and it's like, we were driving past this woman who was jogging. And it was like, "Look at that. Look at that!" And um, then it was, we keep on driving. Then it was like, someone says, "Let's do her." And then, "Let's do it." And um, the others start saying, "Shall we, shall we?" That's when I said, "Let me out of here, I don't want no part of this. I don't want to be part of this".

Int.: Are you saying that it needs a leader and followers to spark the process?"

Tane: Yeah. Um, I never participated in any of that group sexual activity. I never participated in any of that and I don't know why I didn't. Well I do know why I didn't. Um, but it was like, here's an example. These junior gangers that I was amongst in [name of city] um, we were dismantling a house. We were working away there and this Pakeha guy is like, he comes in and starts insulting the boys. Like um, "Do you want these walls to fall on your head? You are doing it wrong, this is how you do it". And, I played um, a leader. I just said, "Fine!" and leaned up against the wall. [Tane demonstrates this with arms folded, chest puffed out, staunch looking stance]. And ah, these other guys are working flat out beside this Pakeha guy and they sort of one-by-one look up and see me beside the wall. Pretty soon they are all leaning against the wall. [Tane is still modelling the illustrative stance]. Then there was just one Maori guy left working next to this Pakeha guy. I goes, "Hey

bro!" and he looked at me, and I sort of nod, "Up against the wall!" [Tane illustrates his head actions here too.] And this Pakeha guy suddenly becomes aware that he is the only one working and we were all standing around watching him. And um, I was, by then tossing a brick up and down. Yeah, so...

Int.: That's quite intimidating.

Tane: Yeah, so, well it, it got worse. 'Cause later on cause we were dismantling a chimneystack, and he walked past and I picked up a brick and biffed it at him and um, all of a sudden there were eight young guys biffing bricks at this one guy.

Int.: So are you saying similar processes happen with gang rape?

Tane: Yeah, yeah, something takes over. Yeah.

Int.: The group process itself takes over?

Tane: It's like there is a rush of adrenalins [sic] and ah, some of these guys are doing things that they would not normally do if they were on their own. Or they wouldn't think about doing those sorts of things. ... Hmm, hmm, one of the reasons that I think I didn't integrate fully into the gang scene is because I was aware of what I was capable of. It's like my growing experience, right through my childhood, leaves me the sort of person that was capable of anything.

Int.: Is that scary for you?

Tane: Hmm, yeah.

Further Comment on Gang Rape.

Each of the ten women interviewed talked about the threat of gang rape. Three women had themselves been gang raped and in neither of these cases was anyone charged in relation to the offences. The other women interviewed had either witnessed part or all of a particular gang rape, had been present in the immediate environment where a gang rape took place, had assisted a woman after she had been gang raped or had heard the first-hand stories of such from others in the aforementioned situations. In all, only one of the 14 separate cases referred to here resulted in criminal charges being laid against any of the offending males. And in that case all the accused were found not guilty on technicalities, although members of the jury and the presiding Judge had little doubt that the offence took place.³

Noting the commentary in international literature on gang rape, this is not surprising. Clearly, “the vast majority of gang rape incidents go unreported” (Ehrhart & Sandler, 1985, p.3) and “prosecutions and convictions are so rare” (O’Sullivan, 1991, p. 141) that some conclude that gang rape is no major problem. However, as the literature reveals, in certain contexts, given the right mix of cultural and group dynamics, many women are at risk of gang/group rape. And the gang scene, like other male domains, is one context where women are at greater risk. The practice, while it goes on unpunished in this way, holds a powerful intimidatory influence over women in these contexts (Sanday, 1990, p. 5).

When scanning the literature on group/pack/gang rape, it becomes clear that gang rape is not restricted to any particular ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic or social sector of society. Gang rapes by male rock bands, members of football and basketball teams, teams of soldiers, members of college fraternities, hippie groups as well as the street, motorcycle and criminal gangs have been reported (see Blanchard, 1959; Boswell & Spade, 1996; Brownmiller, 1975; Gager & Schurr, 1976; Scully, 1990; O’Sullivan, 1998; O’Sullivan, 1991). But it is the case that gang rape is more likely to occur when the following precipitating social, cultural, and group dynamics concurrently merge.

While a group is defined as “two or more people who, for longer than a few moments, interact with and influence one another” (Shaw, 1981 in Meyers, 1988, p.316), the group dynamics relevant to gang rape are not activated unless three or more group members are present (O’Sullivan, 1998, p.83; O’Sullivan, 1991, p.141). It is noted that the men involved in gang rape tend to form a close-knit and cohesive bond with the other group members to achieve a strong sense of belonging and security within the group. This type of connectedness is not so easily developed between two people. As the intimate and cohesive nature of the group develops, the “group polarization” (Meyers, 1988, p.339) effect strengthens, and the in-group versus out-group distinctions become more entrenched and obvious, as do the “symptoms of groupthink” (ibid, 347). Groupthink, as defined by Irving Janis, is:

The mode of thinking that persons engage in when concurrence-seeking becomes so dominant in a cohesive ingroup that it tends to override realistic appraisal of alternative courses of action.
(Janis 1971, cited in Meyers, 1988, p.347)

³ Media coverage of this case is available, but direct referral here will violate confidentiality and may place the person interviewed at risk.

The eight symptoms of groupthink have been outlined as:

- An illusion of invulnerability
- Collective rationalisation
- An unquestioned belief in the groups morality
- Stereotypes promoted about outgroups or opponents
- Conformity pressure and/or direct pressure on dissenters
 - The group engages in self-censorship
 - An illusion of unanimity
- Self appointed 'mindguards' protect the group from information that may disrupt the group effectiveness or morality
(adapted from Meyers, 1988, pp. 347-351)

In many gang rapes it is reported that a leader has to emerge, who engages in talk, challenges, or invitations that crystallise and mobilise the intent of the group at a given point in time (Amir, 1971, pp.195-199; Blanchard, 1959, p.260; O'Sullivan, 1998, p.94). And Tane's comments, previously noted, lend support to this view. Clearly, these 'Shall we?' motivators confront the individual man's concept of himself in relation to the group as a whole and the symptoms of groupthink begin to strengthen. As Blanchard (1959, p.262) relates, many men in these situations "need to defend against any feelings of weakness, inadequacy, or a lack of masculinity." Added to this is a *diffusion of responsibility*. This is where the individual's sense of responsibility diminishes; there is a loss of self-awareness and an increase in personal anonymity that is fostered by the group. This process, known as *deindividuation*, increases to a point where one's personal beliefs and attitudes may be put aside to conform with the spirit of the group. Furthermore, there has to be some *modelling of aggression* and in gang rape this is likely to be against or towards women (Meyers, 1988, pp.332-337; O'Sullivan, 1991, pp.147-149).

In her book, *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on Campus* (1990, p. 10), Peggy-Reeves Sanday argues that gang rape is a form of "sexual expression and a display of the power of the brotherhood to control and dominate women." Her views are easily adaptable to apply within the gang context. Like the college fraternities that Sanday discusses, gang contexts are generally places of male dominance, and a man's "primary loyalty ... and his primary bond of affection" (Sanday, 1990, p.49) are expected to lie with his 'brothers'. The social foundations or cultural correlates that operate in the rape-prone cultures are similar

and are based on the “traditional gender scripts” (Boswell & Spade, 1996, p.134). The women involved are considered the property of men, and are “to be controlled as men struggle to retain and gain control of their environment” (Sanday, 1997, p.65). And by drawing on a set of beliefs pertaining to women’s traditional roles and the associated expectations, men are able to conclude or assume that they have a right to punish, degrade, humiliate and violate women who step outside the traditional social norms. The double standards pertaining to men’s and women’s sexual behaviour seem to be equally prevalent in the college campus fraternities as they are within the gangs referred to in this current study. And thus, like in the college fraternities, gang-related women are often blamed when gang rape and other forms of sexual violence occur. Add to these situation contexts, frequent parties with copious amount of drugs and alcohol, which work to decrease an individual’s inhibitions, and the problem is compounded (Boswell & Spade, 1996, pp. 136-139; Ehrhart & Sandler, 1985, p.7; O’Sullivan, 1991, p.144). The men’s immediate ‘rewards’ of gang rape, a sense of unity, rapport, camaraderie, excitement and sexual gratification are soon realised. Therefore, women involved within these male, rape prone cultures find they are at a greater risk of gang rape and some, like the gang-related women interviewed in this current study, are fully aware of the risk that they encounter. And as Ehrhart and Sandler (1985, p.6) relay, within these contexts:

Gang rape is the “ultimate proof” of men’s power – they are dominant over women. Sex is not seen as an expression of love and friendship but as a way of expressing dominance and/or only as an end in itself.

Hence, women caught up within the gang culture attempt to minimise the risk. Bearing in mind that none of the power and control tactics outlined here operates in isolation from the other controlling tactics presented, it is easy to understand that reducing the threat of harm and making compromise becomes a way of life.

Female Complicity in Male Oppression.

Every now and then one hears stories about women setting up other women for gang rape, and the women interviewed did not deny this fact. And while this was an uncomfortable topic to discuss, Rose said:

There was this other time, when I went in to see what was happening in the room and they had this girl who was really simple, you know. They had just; it was part of the patch thing, you know, to have sex with someone who has got her period. And

she had, and that wasn't the thing that shocked me. I came in just afterwards and there was this [gang-related] woman there. And she says, "What are ya?" and the girl said that she didn't know. And then this woman punched her in the head. She says, "You're a fucking idiot. What are ya?" And this wee girl says, "I'm a fucking idiot." And I thought how could this woman do that to another human being, especially to a woman.

Okay, the girl wasn't as mentally aware as a lot of people but she was still a woman and I couldn't understand how this woman did that, you know. Up to that point, you know, I thought it was just men that did stuff like that, but I knew then that it wasn't. ... Well, it's part of being a member of a gang I suppose and this woman fitted in to a man's world. I suppose she had to do a man's things, you know.

Other women also discussed aspects of women's power and the abuse of power within the gang. In most instances women who were perceived as having power worked through male gang members to achieve it. For example, a woman might talk to her partner about a perceived injustice done to her by someone else, and her partner would see to it that the other person was dealt to. Sometimes the woman herself would take on other women in fights or even take part in setting men up for an assault or women for an assault. In many of the instances discussed, such as that described by Rose above, abuses of power were related to the need to be accepted by the males. "They tried to be like one of the boys," said Lily. And in the cases reported, the men treated these women like prospects. If they wanted to be tough/staunch then they had to be tough/staunch. They had to show it.

Most women interviewed, felt one merely did what one had to do to survive and when it comes gang rape women setting up another women for gang rape the victim may have committed some grave injustice and she is dealt to. Or it comes down to a 'it's you or me' type scenario. As discussed earlier, this may be another survival strategy or patriarchal bargain on the female perpetrators part.

Women's Coping Strategies.

Coping with the violence and abuse is not easy, but it becomes accepted. As Jasmine tried to explain:

I think it's like the dripping tap syndrome, it just becomes a part of life, you know. I mean it gets easier, it gets easier to live with. For what ever reason you can sit there a lot better the third time than you can the first. I call it the dripping tap syndrome. You sit there, boom, boom, boom, and after the first hour, you either get used to it *or get out*. You gotta get used to it 'cause it's not gonna stop, so you

just gotta get used to it. You just do whatever it is, it means doing whatever it is you have to do to put up with it, *like a dripping tap!* I just think that it is factual, I mean if I was in a room and that [a rape or assault] was happening and it was driving me crazy, I'd have to do one of two things. One would be to try and stop it and I mean if I thought it was gonna cost me my life or a hiding, I mean you only got two choices. Either learn to live with it or get out. Bloody learn to live with the drip or get out. There is a choice, but it's almost like you have to die to make that choice.

During the group socialisation period a number of coping strategies were learned and employed by the gang-related women interviewed that allowed them to tolerate, survive and sometimes resist the violence and abuse that the men adopted. The tactics most often reported during the interviews were 'blocking it out' or denying of the situation, and constructing rationalisations to explain or minimise any violence and/or abuse that had occurred. As Lily reported:

Yeah, blocking off. I think when you're stuck right in the middle you accept that life so you don't allow yourself to see it as any different to any other life. You accept it more. *It's life!* That's what I found, you just accept that's life and that's how it's gonna be. Every other woman goes through the same!

Daisy talked about holding on to the good times. As she said:

So women, I held on to that tiny tiny, little, you know that five-minute thing. The really loving, caring person that I can only see... for five minutes. And they blow up that, illuminate, magnify that five minutes of kindness.

Thistle said:

It was hard and you liked to believe that they didn't even do what they did, you know. Um, I'd get the hidings when he'd fucked up... but I didn't look half as bad as a lot of people, you know. ... He was good, I mean he didn't leave bruises. Like he'd go for under here [pointing to her neck area] and that doesn't bruise easily or didn't seem to or you don't see them, or I don't know.

Pansy talked about blocking out her own feelings, especially the fear, through the use of drugs or by shutting herself off from the reality of her experiences. She stated:

It made me feel sick. There were times when I could have committed suicide. I didn't want to live any more. I had no hope. You become cold. It's like your heart's

cut, like someone's cut your heart out. And then seeing gang rapes, it's like you can't feel anything. You become cold.

Similarly, Daisy, Rhodo, Violet, Freesia, Lily and Rose talked about using drugs or alcohol in their attempts to cope with living within the gang context. As Lily acknowledged:

...I was probably too drunk to realise what was happening, half the time.

And Rose said:

Well I drank a lot; I actually became an alcoholic.

It is also clear that the women employed various rationalisations, similar to those adopted by the men and based on traditional gender role and role expectations, to make sense of or to excuse and minimise any violence and abuse that they experienced or observed. Rhodo, Daisy, Lily, Violet, Freesia, Thistle and Rose all provided examples of such. One of the more illustrative pictures of minimising the violence and abuse came from Rhodo when she discussed her thoughts and feelings about the death of a fellow gang-related woman whose partner had kicked her with steel capped boots. As a result the woman died and the male, convicted of manslaughter, spent several years in prison. Rhodo reflected:

Well, I just thought that it was unfortunate. I personally believed she was awful to him, off and on. And he must have been awful to her, but I didn't think of that at that time, that he was. I mean he looked so, he always looked so kind. In fact he had comforted me once when, um, when [partner's name] ex-girlfriend was there once, so I sort of had a soft spot for him. So when that happened to her I, I thought um, I actually didn't feel bad towards him at all. I just thought that they had had an argument. He hit her and the worst came to the worst. When she was with [another gang member's name] I saw her with black eyes, things like that, that's about all. But I mean I was quite hard on people really. I mean, I saw her behaving quite trollopy, sort of. For me, I just thought that she, herself, stirred men up. She stirred her partner up, at that time.

Rhodo explained that she now thinks differently about that situation having moved away from the gang scene and she emphasised "that no-one deserved that". Like other gang women she found it easier to blame the victim rather than face the enormity of a fatal kicking. To fail to do so would bring home the reality of one's own position.

Less dramatically, Rose tried to illustrate how the process of self-blame and being blamed for the abuse that one receives can actually whittle away one's self esteem and encourage women to withdraw into themselves. She disclosed how other's reaction in this way made her to shut herself away from the reality of what had happened when a gang member raped her. She said:

Gang women can judge themselves very harshly anyway and to go and tell another [gang] woman, *well!* I mean, like me I told my girlfriend that I was raped and she didn't believe me. I was put down for it and that can shut you down. "Ah, ya fucking slut!" she said. It shut me down for a long, long time you know.

And sometimes the gang women do blame themselves rather than the perpetrators. Freesia, for example said:

I ended up in hospital, because of *my* big mouth.

Rhodo avoided violence by playing the role expected of her even though she objected to the way the men treated women in a general sense. She said:

Um, I didn't go along with their activities and I used to say so, but I didn't say it all the time 'cause I knew that while I was there, that this was the way things were, so I was careful. I accepted and went along with it as long as it was helping me with [partner's name], to get him out of the gang. I would accept it to a point so it was not going to jeopardise our relationship. Deep down, I never accepted it.

Rhodo also learned to keep herself apart from most of the other women at gang functions. She did not trust them and thought that they were sleeping around with many men when she was not. Moreover, she believed that they were a threat to her relationship with her partner. In many ways, however, suspicion and mistrust amongst the women was fed by the men's activities, going on runs and leaving partners behind, bringing 'dirty girls' on the scene and limiting times when partners were able to be present at club functions.

Other strategies noted by the women interviewed included spending time imaging or plotting revenge in some form or another. Two of the women talked about thinking about killing their partners or hoping that "something" would happen to them. Then they would spend time imaging a different sort of life. Thistle talked about revenge in a different sense. She said:

Oh, you just close off and think about what's going on. You know what's going on. You know that they will be partying up, you know there's the dirty girls and if you are going to fuck around on your man while they are away, well. You think that you might as well, 'cos what the hell, you know when they are coming back [from runs] but... Yeah, you think about it.

And Rose talked about not helping a woman who was raped. She said:

...I had to survive, you know. It's like any survival thing, you might think you'll do something, but when it comes to survival, your own survival is pretty important. And I thought that it would not have made any difference for her anyway. What could I have done? Nothing.

These strategies are about survival. The women concerned, knowing that, did not try to justify their actions beyond this. But as already noted the compromises, the patriarchal bargains or the coping strategies reported throughout this project tended to support the status quo. Often they did not lead to change and life went on as it has done previously. As will be shown, the gang-related women in this study *have* made some dramatic changes in their lives and have been able to shift way from the chaotic, violent and abusive context of the gang that they were once bound up in. The power and control tactics employed by the males involved have now lost much of their power.

What is important to understand from this section is that while many of the power and control tactics applied by abusive men outside the gang context are similar to those employed by gang members, there are certain characteristics pertaining to the collective nature of the gangs that need to be taken into account when assisting gang-related women. And while the outsider may not understand the coping strategies that the women adopted, these women have shared their stories so that others may find a better way to find to make the changes that these women eventually made for themselves. Now we will explore the women's decisions to leave and the journeys that they took.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

LEAVING ABUSIVE GANG MEMBERS AND/OR THE GANG BEHIND.

Introduction.

All the women interviewed have moved away from either the abusive gang-related relationships in which they were involved or the gang scene itself. And although some of the women maintained minimal links with people from within the gangs, all have made dramatic changes to their lives. These changes have included leaving the gang lifestyle behind. This section explores the processes through which these changes have occurred and includes reflection on the blocks or restraints to leaving, the decisions to leave and the process of leaving. Brief consideration is also given to life after these journeys and reflections on the women's future prospects and goals. Before exploring the above themes, it is useful to have a general understanding of why women stay in violent and abusive relationships, whether gang-related or not.

Violence and Abuse: Why Women Stay.

As can be seen, the violent and abusive episodes discussed by the gang-related women throughout this study have not involved isolated, incidents of aggression. Rather, the women's profiles and their shared experiences reveal long histories of repetitive violent outbursts and an almost continuous plethora of abuse. Over the last two decades there has been a proliferation of articles, books, and research summaries written that have attempted to convey an understanding of *why women stay* in on-going violent and abusive relationships such as those the women in this study described (see Barnett & LaViolette, 1993; Gelles & Cornell, 1990; Hoff, 1991; Lockton & Ward, 1997; Douglas, 1998; Walker, 1979). Many debates have emerged surrounding the theories promulgated.

One of the more prominent explanations was put forward by psychologist, Lenore Walker in 1979. She employed Martin Seligman's theory of *learned helplessness* in her attempt to understand the patterns of behaviour that evolve in violent and abusive heterosexual relationships (Walker, 1993, pp.134-135; 1989, pp.42-43; 1979, pp.49-50). She then outlined the *cycle of violence* theory and subsequently, conceptualised the *battered woman syndrome* [BWS]. Briefly, learned helplessness has been outlined as follows:

...women who are victims of repeated violence have feelings of self-blame, low concepts of self-worth, and suffer from despair, depression and anxiety. Due to the

repeated assaults they feel that they cannot control what is happening or what will happen and therefore feel that they are helpless to prevent further violence.
(Lockton & Ward, 1997, pp.22-23)

The cycle of violence theory illustrates the cyclic nature of violence and abuse that occurs in abusive relationships, and categorises the perpetrator's behaviours into three distinct phases. The first phase denotes the tension-building period where frustrations are vented in a number of ways including verbal outbursts, mutterings and subtle controlling acts. The second phase is the period in which tension and frustrations culminate in violence and abuse. And the third stage, after the assaults have taken place, is a period of respite in which the victim/woman receives the reconciliatory expressions of remorse and love, and promise of reform from the perpetrator (Barnett & LaViolette, 1993, pp.15-16; Douglas, 1998, pp.77-88; Walker, 1989, pp.42-63). Walker argued that women involved in long-term violent and abusive relationships experience "intermittent reinforcement" (Walker, 1989, p.47) during the respite stage of the cycle of violence and the women glimpse the kind, caring men that they initially loved. This reinforcement fosters feelings of hope for the women and they stay in their relationships hoping for change and an end to the violence. Over time, however, many women report that the perpetrator's accusations and blame obliterate any respite period and having internalised much of the blame themselves, the women begin to feel powerless as the psychological consequences of the violence accumulate. As the cycle repeats itself, the women become more entrenched and trapped within their relationships and soon "develop certain coping strategies or adaptation responses" (ibid, p.48). In time, the women come to regard their sufferings and the violence and abuse as unavoidable. Their self-esteem and confidence plummet and they find it difficult to make positive choices for themselves. The conceptualisation of BWS has provided an understanding of the psychological consequences that victims of long-term violence and abuse experience.

The psychological symptoms of BWS are similar to other post-traumatic stress disorders, for example, rape trauma syndrome, combat veteran syndrome and other psychological syndrome equivalents that evolve from traumatic situations. Cognitive distortions, including confused and pessimistic thinking, are notable. Isolation and an inability to trust compound matters, to limit any options that may initially be perceived (Walker, 1993, p.134). Intrusive memories of the previously experienced trauma that arise spontaneously, sometimes in dreams, impact heavily on the thinking and decision-making processes. And those memories that re-enact all

or part of the traumatic event, generate strong feelings of vulnerability, anxiety and fear. Depression, sleep problems, hypervigilance, irritability and the adoption of avoidance strategies, consciously through drugs and alcohol, or unconsciously through minimisation, denial, repression and/or disassociation, are also noted (Walker, 1993, pp.140-143). Other stress reactions reported include an extremely low self-esteem, passivity and guilt (Barnette & LaViolette, 1993, p.14).

Supporters of BWS have generated much understanding about the battered woman's plight. It is now well known throughout the world and has provided the basis for the defence of diminished responsibility when women have killed abusive and violent partners (Lockton & Ward, 1997, p.174). In New Zealand, a number of prominent trials have brought BWS to the public's attention. In 1993 for example, much debate was, and still is, generated around the case of Tania Witika who is currently serving a 16-year sentence for a number of offences including manslaughter (McDonald, 1997, p.402). Tania, along with her partner, Eddie Smith, were both found "equally culpable" (McLoughlin, 1998, p.37) for the death of her daughter, Delcelia Witika, in March 1991. Her body, weakened by months of severe child abuse and malnutrition, could not survive the final brutal stomping. The cause of death was peritonitis caused by blows to her abdomen.

Although Tania admitted to assaulting Delcelia on a number of occasions, she claimed that Smith, having held a knife to her throat earlier, would not let her stay with Delcelia the day she was left home alone to die. Thus, in failing to provide the necessities of life or to get help for the child, Tania had contributed to her death. While it was accepted that Tania was repeatedly assaulted and raped by Smith, any reference to BWS at Tania's trial appears to have been negated, going by her conviction and sentence (McDonald, 1997, pp. 402-402; Max, 1992, pp.66-77; McLoughlin, 1998, pp.32-41; Newbold, 2000, pp.121-122).

Lavinia Manukau found herself in a similar situation. Her 11-year-old son, Graig Manukau, was kicked to death by his drunken father in November 1992. Lavinia too was repeatedly assaulted by the child's father, but in contrast to Tania Witika, Lavinia did not assault her child, and was "viewed as powerless to save her son" (McDonald, 1997, p.402). With her victimisation being acknowledged, Lavinia was found not guilty in relation to the boy's death (McDonald, 1997, pp.402-403; McLoughlin, 1998, pp.43-53). More recently, Te Rangi Whakaruru pleaded guilty to her part in the death of James Whakaruru, aged four. While her

partner, Benny Haerewa brutally assaulted the boy, Te Rangi stood by, too afraid to tell anyone, or to interfere because she was scared that Haerewa would turn on her. Judge Christianson, stated that Te Rangi “may have been a victim of battered women’s syndrome” (Coddington, 2000, p.36). As her victimisation was noted, Te Rangi was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, suspended for two years, two years probation and was ordered to attend counselling sessions.

These cases, while promoting much discussion, have brought BWS into the public arena and increased understandings about women stuck in abusive and violence situations. And while some will argue that there is *no excuse for child abuse* [the words inscribed on my pen], others are adamant that women’s victimisation needs to be taken into account in the above, or similar type cases. Controversy also arose around the trial of Gay Oakes, who was convicted on 6 September 1994 for the murder of her defacto partner, Doug Gardiner. Gay also claimed that she was suffering from BWS, that she “was so scared of him that he no longer needed to use physical violence. A threat, or even a look, was enough...” (Oakes, cited in Bungay, 1998, p.168). The jury, however, did not hear Gay’s call and found her guilty of murder (*NZ Herald*, 7 Sept. 1994; *Press*, 3 Sept. 1994; *Press*, 7 Sept. 1994; *Press*, 8 Sept. 1994; *Press*, 16 August 1997). And more recently, Rhonda Bungay’s book *Scarecrows: Why Women Kill* (1998) also brings BWS to the fore. This book attempts to highlight the connection between the lives of women who kill, and their crimes that they have committed. And BWS is presented as dominant factor in the majority of the cases. Although BWS has gained such recognition, there has been much critique of the concepts involved from various quarters.

The critique of BWS generally pertains to the concept of learned helplessness. In an American field study, Lee Ann Hoff, nurse-anthropologist and crisis specialist, interviewed twelve women after they had left battered women’s shelters about their thoughts on a number of issues relating to domestic violence including the idea of *helplessness*. Hoff makes it clear that these women, although they felt helpless, were in fact “hardly helpless” (Hoff, 1991, p.64). The women she interviewed strategised or took steps to stop or reduce the violence and to protect their children. As Hoff said:

Their accounts also reveal that they actively defended themselves and that when they did not, it was not necessarily because they felt helpless; rather, they had learned that a worse beating or other negative consequences would ensue.

(Hoff, 1991, pp.64-65)

Clearly, psychological responses combined with the reality of physical danger experienced by women, and the threat faced when attempting to leave violent and abusive relationships, interacts with social, political and economic influences. Hoff's data revealed that factors such as "economic dependency, child care responsibilities, a commitment to the relationship and the sense of failure" (Lockton & Ward, 1997, p.24) were also significant considerations that kept women locked into the status quo. Hoff argues that any explanation pertaining to why women stay in 'dangerous relationships' must take into account the interaction between four factors. These are:

...(1) the woman's own reasoning process, ie. how she makes sense out of her experience; (2) the social-cultural roots of her reasoning process and self-concept; (3) the beliefs and first-hand accounts of persons in a battered woman's social network; (4) how these social-psychological factors might intersect with the political economy in the woman's social milieu.

(Hoff, 1991, p.32)

While the theory of learned helplessness and BWS have been useful in widening the understanding of the psychological consequences of being victim to prolonged violence and abuse, they do not generate a comprehensive understanding of why women stay. The criticism surrounding learned helplessness and BWS relates to the theories being psychologically orientated and that, while not totally discounted, little recognition has been given to the social factors involved (see Gelles & Cornell, 1990; Hoff, 1991; Lockton & Ward, 1997). As such these theories tend to evoke images of the women as being totally "passive recipients" (Lockton & Ward, 1997, p.23) rather than people who make decisions and seek help. This perception works to engender and support victim-blaming responses, which imply that the women involved need to be treated or are somehow responsible for the abuse that they endured. This perception then works to shift emphasis away from offending males who need to be held accountable for trauma that they have imposed on women.

Blocks to Leaving 'Dangerous Relationships'.

While the debate over learned helplessness and BWS will continue, women in violent and abusive relationships continue to struggle with the complexities of their lives. Taking note of women's comments in previous research (see Douglas, 1998) and from my own experience within the field, the following list, although not exhaustive, highlights the everyday hurdles

that women negotiate, which provide insights into why women stay in or return to 'dangerous relationships'.

- Fear, based on past experience, and repetitive threats of more or worse violence
- Low self-esteem, depression, and shame
- Guilt and self-blame
- Being afraid of being alone
- Feeling isolated with little or no support
- His promises of reform
- His attempts to change through counselling, attending stopping violence programmes, giving up or limiting drug and/or alcohol usage
- His threats, direct or implicit, of suicide
- His announced vulnerability
- The woman's own use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Having nowhere to go, not knowing where or how to access support and information
- Lack of understanding from family, friends, employers and so on
- Police inaction
- Pressure from extended family, children and/or in-laws
- Religious, spiritual, cultural beliefs [marriage for better or worse and so on]
- Wanted to make the marriage/relationship work
- Feel like a failure because the marriage/relationship has not worked
- Wanted to keep the family together
- Did not want to give up financial security
- Costs of moving, getting court orders, lawyers and so forth
- Having to go to court
- Costs related to new accommodation [bonds, high rents, connecting utilities and so on]
- Prospect of managing on a limited income
- Not wanting to be dependent on others or the state
- Stigma associated with becoming a beneficiary
- Negative stereotypes relating to single parenthood and 'solo mums'
- Other's disbelief and/or negative or blaming attitudes
- Being afraid the abuser will get custody of the children
- Concerns about the consequences for the children with regards to taking them away from their father
- Wrong time [waiting for the children to get older and so on]
- Prospect of raising children alone

And in this present study, the gang-related women interviewed also stated or indicated that the following factors, as well as many of those mentioned above, contributed to their staying in dangerous relationships.

- They were afraid ⇔ terrified of gang retaliation, violence and intimidation
- The gang's network systems made it feel like there was nowhere to hide
- They were concerned about other gang members and associates who would support the abusive offender
- They were afraid ⇔ terrified about the possibility of being stalked, harassed or found by partner and/or other gang members
- Outsiders had refused to provide help when asked on previous occasions
- Outsiders did not want to get involved with people connected to gangs
- Outsiders had a lack of understanding with regards to gang life
- Isolation from family and friends within the wider community
- Gang members and associates were not afraid of the police, or the law
- Gang women had little or no confidence in the police witness protection programme
- The women had internalised the gang's cultural beliefs and attitudes which made it difficult to obtain court orders [getting court orders felt like narking]
- Getting police involved was narking
- It was hard to imagine life away from the gang

Two other considerations or blocks to leaving 'gang relationships' that came to light during the interviews are also of concern. The first relates to gang-related women being turned away from women's refuges when they were in crisis or had been attempting to leave a violent and abusive situation. Daisy related the following:

One of the times, it's the only time I went into refuge. Um, I just grabbed my kids, grabbed some clothes and some food out of the cupboards and I just split. I had to more or less flee from my house um to leave my partner. I was desperate and I wanted to leave. A lot of people had been saying, you know, "Do it, do it, you can leave. There will be a lot of support and help. Leave, go to a refuge." you know, "It's the safest place, and you'll really get a lot of support there." And so, anyway, I was in a real mortified state of leaving, I was desperate, and I had to. So I did and I went to a refuge. I had to wait for an hour to see somebody, to see the coordinator, only to find out, once I told her that I was affiliated with a gang, that I wasn't able to stay there. And that no other place would take me either because I had affiliations.

So you are basically on your own to find somewhere else to stay. Um and at that stage, well my whole beliefs that this place was going to support me and help me, um [pause]. They don't advertise that if you're affiliated to gangs or if you've got any connections that it's not a safe place for you, that [refuge] is only for a particular clientele group. Um, so yeah and there aren't any places that I know of even today. And that was about five years ago now um [pause]. Where can women who are leaving gangs actually go and have that place of safety. Um, you know, I mean you can understand that you're actually placing other people at risk, but hey how at risk are you, yourself and your children.

But um, and then, you know the quick fixes, like being in a refuge or you know having some counselling or things like that, it's make-up, you know. It's just a quick fix because I know for myself and a lot of the women that have been into refuge and they have been counselled and things like that, we've gone back to our partners. Um and because we have gone back there has been no on-going support, because it's like, "Oh well, we have given you a chance, you blew it. You went back."

Lily also talked about not being accepted into women's refuge. She explained that the reason given related to the safety of other women in the safe house and that there was a threat that the gang members would turn up. She also explained that she "was basically on her own" and "that the refuges could not be trusted for support." After hearing the comments made by Daisy and Lily I phoned the women's refuges in the area where these women lived.

The advocates that I spoke to outlined the reason why some refuges refuse to take gang-affiliated women into their house. Of most importance was the need to keep other [non gang-affiliated] women safe. This had come about because there had been occasions when groups of gang members had stormed in on one of the refuges. As the costs of re-establishing a refuge each time this occurs are unsustainable this is, perhaps, understandable. Upon further discussion, I found that some refuge advocates were able to provide gang-related women with an alternative avenue of support. This action, however, was generally made through personal connections outside of refuge.

From my experience within women's refuge, I know that not all refuges are affiliated to the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges and the women were not clear whether the refuges spoken about previously were affiliated or not. I have discussed this issue with refuge advocates locally, and they comment that there has been no specific training or guidelines regarding the safety of gang-related women coordinated by the national body. This does not mean that the individual refuges have not dealt with this issue. In fact some refuges have established informal, but clear strategies for working with gang-related women. Unfortunately, these guidelines cannot be outlined, as this would make the information freely available and will place the women who need to use the service at risk.

Other information obtained through the interviews indicated that the service had worked adequately for some of the women interviewed. Pansy was grateful for the support that she received from refuge. And even though she stated that she "felt like a prisoner" at times and

that she did not feel absolutely safe, her two-year connection with the refuge paved the way for a brighter future. The reason Pansy did not feel really safe was because she was aware, as are some refuge workers, that the gangs have been known to send other gang-related women into the refuges to look for woman who abscond. Refuges that accept gang-related women, however, do have strategies to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of this occurring of this occurring.

The other factor that came to light during the interviews relates to economic dependency. Detective Neale noted that:

Family support and child support are more readily available to women outside gangs as the male is less likely to be getting his income through illegal means, which is non-taxable.

As indicated, family support and child support are calculated according to taxable incomes and gang-related women's partners are likely to be sourcing various sums through drug dealing and other criminal activities. If these women leave their relationship the 'perks' that sometimes go along with it are generally lost. In some cases, this may mean that these women and their children are extremely limited in terms of securing an income through legitimate means, especially if the gang member concerned is unemployed and is not collecting a benefit. Even if he was collecting a benefit, he would legally only have to pay the minimum amount of child support while he is possibly pulling in huge sums. When gang-related women are used to living off the proceeds of crime, the shortfall in real dollar terms may also hinder the chances of leaving a dangerous relationship.

While acknowledging the blocks or restraints that make it difficult for women to leave both the gang scene and their abusive or violent partners, all the women interviewed overcame these challenges. In time, each of the women made pronounced changes and moved towards a safer environment and a more peaceful way of living.

Women's Reasons for Leaving Partner or the Gang Scene.

As with women outside the gang context (Hoff, 1991, p.56), there is no one reason why the women interviewed finally decided to leave the gang scene or their violent and abusive gang-

member partners behind. The women interviewed discussed major reasons for leaving in the following way.

Daisy: I was sort of, my children were getting older. The situation wasn't getting any better. I actually thought that it was going to get better. In fact it probably got worse and at the end of the day, I sort of thought that these were the only options. You know, I'm either going to end up killing myself, my partner's going to end up killing me or I'm going to end up killing him. So when it got to that sort of stage I was now experiencing the stuff that I had blocked out. It was still there and it wasn't being dealt with. I was turning it back in on myself with the drugs, the alcohol, the self-abuse all those sorts of things. ... Yeah it just felt like hell. Drugs and alcohol were just a way of numbing the pain for a few hours. Just escaping from the reality of it all.

And later in the interview, Daisy said:

For me at the end of the day after, when I sort of pulled away from my partner and there are a lot of things, you know going on for him at that time. He ended up leaving the gang and um we both went through counselling and through groups and things like that and sort of had support from independent people.

Rhodo: But we went out, this time, with [his mother] and somehow we had an argument afterwards, after we dropped her off. And um, he just said he was going for good and all that. So he packed up his stuff and he went back to, he moved back into the pad. And um...

Int.: Yeah, they've always got somewhere to go, the pad!

R.hodo: Yeah [laugh]. Um, that's the other thing with me. I never accepted him for what he was. I never called him [nickname] he was always [name] so I didn't accept that. Anyway, he went back there and after a couple of days, I became my weak self again and tried to go around and get him back. He kicked me out. Um, that's right, I was pregnant, just. And I'd done that just as an attempt to keep him.

Int.: So you deliberately got pregnant?

Rhodo: Yeah, 'cause I'd been on the pill and all that. But I'd gone off it and he had agreed. But like I said, I would have talked him around to agreeing. But, um, so I thought I'm pathetic. I just thought, "I haven't got my son with me, I'm pregnant, the guy doesn't want to be with me," so I decided to have an abortion. I got the appointment and all that, but I had two things. My first husband's brother had become a Christian, and I decided to go and talk to him to see if there was some answer there that could help me. So um, I met them and they were real keen to um, show me how it helped them and all that. So I went to church. It was probably only about three days after we had split up. And I made a decision to follow what I thought God wanted from my life. And I was, I felt like I had received help in coping, emotionally I felt that I could cope, suddenly. Because really, I think, I had brought some security into my life from somewhere else. Not from a man but from, well, from God.

Thistle: Probably the last straw was the [rival gang] deal and they got pictures of my house and that. ... And I thought, "Fuck that." It was none of my business, you know. I mean I had nothing to do with their business, you know their shootings or whatever, anything like that. But [my partner] was the Sergeant at Arms, or whatever you call it at that time, and you'd walk into the garage and there would be gun bits on the ground, shavings, you know, sawn-off shotguns or whatever. And then I knew that there were guns in my house and I didn't know where and it used to make me spew, really, 'cause it was my house.

Jasmine: I think some of that pain that violence and stuff brings, yeah, you have to learn and you have to learn fast because the prices are high. The prices aren't high just for yourself. ... That was it for me, that's what I fight for now, to try and keep my family together. We try to be as wholesome as we can be. Like for me to live in a violent relationship and for my children to see violence, like I know the price. We had already paid the price and it's huge.

I mean, what is it that makes you front up? What is it? Is it the death of a child or is it? I mean, like I was proud of my home. I worked hard and I thought that at least I've got a home for my children and all that. And in a way you do have a sense that I want to provide for my children even when you're sick!

Pansy: Oh, when they took the machete to me. The rapes I think you become numb over the years of being raped by drunks and the abuse and when I wanted to get out, Glennis, I didn't want my child to go through what I had been through.

Rose: Oh and he did tell me that [the relationship was over] at the end there, when I got my stomach pumped, he said goodbye.

Int: Is that when you tried to commit suicide?

Rose: Yeah, I got my stomach pumped and he said to me goodbye, and I knew that would be the end of it. He said to me, "Go and buy yourself a motorbike". And I remembered that and I actually did a while later.

Int: Let's talk about your suicide attempt.

Rose: Well, I thought that I was accepted there, and this guy said that he didn't love me and I felt that I really loved him. It felt like this was the big rejection, the rejection of all rejections. And I thought that I would never be loved. That's what it felt like. I thought that if this person doesn't love me, I wouldn't ever be loved. I wanted to die really. I didn't know how to feel better about that, you know. I felt like it was the only way out, Yeah.

Daff: ...he always used to say to me that I hated his friends. I never hated his friends; I just never wanted to be around them. I just um, I just used to think that I could manage without them so I will. I never stopped him from seeing them though. We were living different lives really.

Int: Do you think that is why your marriage broke up, you were leading different lives?

Daff: Yeah, I think so. You can't both be living under the one roof and be going off on different tracks all the time. It just doesn't work.

Lily: It wasn't me that made the decision. It was my partner when he was in jail. He decided that he had had enough and was going to put his patch in. Um, it didn't really bother me too much because I didn't really see much of him when he was inside and yeah, um, I never got hassled because of the respect he had from them.

Him pulling out for one of the gang and starting our own family. He settled right down when we started having children. Like he was hard into the [gang] then, we never had any kids of our own. I only had the one from a previous relationship. He's an excellent father, he really is. He really loves his kids. They just mellowed him out.

Violet: It's the kids and that you want more for them and that you are not going to get more for them sitting in that situation, you know. ... That's what I really worried about, my son. ... My little boy swung a knife around when he is angry, you know. ... Today it's happening to kids so young, *so young*. They say it's all right, but they are aware of what's happening and that's what I hate. It's 'cause they are aware of it too.

Freesia: It got to a stage where it just built up inside of me. I got to a stage after seeing it, [another women gang raped] and experiencing it that I just said, "I'm outta here. *I am* out of here," and I did. ... I seen the light! I had enough of going to hospital for no reason at all, being bashed for nothing. I tried to pull him away. I made a leave and tried to pull him away but he wouldn't.

Three prominent themes relating to reasons for leaving emerged from the interviews, these being: a) the acknowledgment of the severity of the violence, b) comprehending the impact violence and abuse had on the children, and c) the women's partner made the final decision to end the relationship or pull away from the gang. And while some women left in crisis, others planned their 'get away'. Similar themes have been noted elsewhere in domestic violence research and in gang research.

Hoff's research for example, notes that women leave dangerous relationships because they begin to make "sense of their victimization" (1991, p.56). Some of the women she talked to discussed extreme violence experienced during pregnancy. Some feared for their children, while others began to contemplate suicide. Some believed that their partner might just kill them, and others found that it was too difficult to hide the bruises and beatings (ibid, pp.56-67). Clearly, the decision-making process is complex drawing in a number of personal and

social considerations. Whether the women appears to makes a spontaneous final decision to leave during a crisis or acts as a “crisis manager” (ibid, p.72) over a period of time until it is safe to leave, many hours of thought, thinking through strategies and contemplating consequential scenarios occur before action is finally taken. A similar process seems to move gang members and their associates towards leaving the gang.

There is little research on why and how gang members and associates leave gangs (Decker, & Lauritsen, 1996, p.109; Spergel, 1995, p.104) and most of what is available applies to males. There is, however, some similarity between genders regarding the concerns about impact on children and the extremity of violence. Between 1990 and 1993, Decker & Lauritsen (1996, pp.109-117) interviewed gang members and ex-gang members of both genders from St. Louis about issues relating to leaving the gang. The reasons given for leaving included the level of violence and family obligations among others factors, such as moving to another area. The reasons noted included:

I didn't want to die. Just one day I got out.

Because I got to realizing it wasn't my type of life. I didn't want to live that type of life. One time, I got seriously stabbed and I was in hospital for like 3 months.

Because of my loved ones. I couldn't keep neglecting them.

Because I've got two children to live for.

(Quotes taken from Decker & Lauritsen, 1996, pp.109-111)

Similarly, in his book *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach* (1995, p. 105), Irving Spergel makes a note that male gang members tend to become aware of the “long-term negative consequences” of being involved with a gang. This may come about as they mature, and find less stressful ways to meet their social and emotional needs or fatherhood, imprisonment or “battle fatigue” (Spergel, 1995, p.105) may generate the shift in attitude. Females, he claims, are less committed to the gang and tend to pull away from their gang involvement when children come into the picture. He also notes that women can play a key role in this area to influence male members to take leave from the gang.

New Zealand research on male gang members comes to the same conclusion. Lala's research found gang members left the gangs because they developed a “growing awareness of their

responsibilities to long-term partners and children” (Lala, 1996, p.93) and developed an understanding of how violence impacted on their own and their loved one’s lives. While more research would need to be carried out in this area, I suspect that a gradual awareness of the impact of violence and abuse develops over time for both men and women. The immediate consequences may vary, but the long-term impact is negative in both cases. Whether male or female, coming to terms with the reality and making decisions about one’s life is a process that generally takes time. And in the meantime the extremities of violence and the impact of violence on the self, the children, the family and friends takes toll before change occurs.

The Process of leaving.

The women interviewed talked about the process of leaving and although some tried to leave several times before they left, or they waited until their partner made a decision to leave, the process appeared to be easier than most of the women contemplated. Nevertheless, some women left in mid-crisis and narrowly escaped losing their lives. Freesia said:

I had no qualms. I had just made my mind up and it was cool. I had some support from a friend and her hubby, um. I just steered clear. I actually moved to another town and he went to jail. I wrote him a letter and told him that I had had a son to him. Some women have to go further. I’m glad I made the break because life is better.

Lily tried to move away, but ended up returning to the relationship. She said:

Lily: Um, I had to go to Australia to get away from him. I stayed there for a year and a half and found myself coming back here and getting back into that same relationship. Um, I don’t know why but I was, um, just that love. ... He’d track me down. Before I went to Aussie I tried to stay here and I found he was stalking me. Um, not only that he had heard that I had been seen, that I’d been drinking with the [another gang] so he was ‘hitting’ their pads. ... Try and get the cops involved? That didn’t even phase him! He was not scared of the cops. He was fearless. That was scary! I felt that if the cops are not going to deter him from leaving me alone then nobody is.

Lily returned to the relationship and she and her partner had children he moved away from the gang. She then said:

They [the children] just mellowed him out. And we had a lot of counselling and that as well. It brought out that a lot of his behaviour extended from his childhood as well. He came from a very violent family. He was sexually abused um, by his own

family members and all that. I think all that was just building up inside of him, a lot of anger. ... I went through all that, and there was a really loving person under all that. And I think that's why I stuck around too. You know, there was another loving person under all those leathers and shit.

Daisy moved away from her partner when he went to prison for assaulting her. After he made some lifestyle changes, Daisy returned to the relationship. She said:

...at the time I was led to a place and I stayed with some Christians and lucky me, it was their study night that night and so a woman shared with me and her family, let my children and me stay with her for a week, until we sorted through a few things for ourselves. ... He ended up leaving the gang and um we both went through counselling and through groups and things like that and sort of had support from independent people. And two years after he left the gang we both gave our hearts to Jesus. My partner did a year before myself and that has been, I guess, that has set us free not only from our personal issues, ... we work with a lot of gang members, we work with a lot of ex-gang members. And um you know, we reach out to them with the same help that we have been given. Um, both myself and my partner, it's been a personal relationship with Jesus that has saved us and has set us free from the past. When it comes to inner strength and things like that it comes from Jesus.

Religion played a part in Jasmine's journey. She said:

For me my saving grace was when I became a Christian. Like it had a set of rules that I understood. I could go like, "Oh God, this is my first step," ...I f you do this, then this is gonna happen. I never had those sets of rules before. You know, nobody [told] me how I was meant to think and feel. ... I suppose, we all need a map. ... I mean, people say that it's a crutch really and that's okay. For me it's been an education really. So many of us don't have it and I think its inside that has to change. You can only do so much with the head. But when you have got your spirit, your spirit is something like, for me, you see I never had a spirit.

Rhodo made changes in her life through religion, and after a while her partner became a Christian and left the gang too. Rhodo said:

Yes, I went [to church] regularly um, and what happened was that, oh, I prayed a prayer and I believed at that time. I mean God just became the uppermost, the everything of my life. And when I prayed a prayer, I believed if I ask God he'd make it so I would never have to see [my partner] again. Which I thought would be quite easy, or else if we were meant to be together that I would see him within 24 hours, which I didn't think, was likely. I was testing. I just wanted to see what would happen, what I was meant to do. So he rang up in the next couple of days and he needed to get some keys he had left somewhere and I took that as a sign um. ... Yeah, and in some ways I just I went back to my manipulation. In some ways but I

was, I put it under the guise of being a Christian, my Christian beliefs. So when I met up with him it wasn't that cut and dry. It's only when I look back I can see, you know, that I was operating like that again. I mean I had been okay for a week or something. I had thought that I'd really been helped but um, I grasped back on to the manipulation fairly fast, as soon as he put a foot in the door. So when he came to get the key he asked if there was anyway that we could be together still. And I said, "We'd have to be married 'cause I don't believe we should be together without being married." For me I'd really gone from black to white! *Straight away!* So we got married six weeks later. ... When we came back he didn't go all that much, he just slowly stopped going to the pad. And I started getting him to know more of the people [Christians] that I'd got to know. I knew that he'd have to fill the gap that was left in his life so I arranged things so we had a lot to do with these other people. ... I think he started to become affected by my, by what I believed to be good, my Christian beliefs and one thing he did say was that he started to become aware of evil more than what he did before, the reality of evil.

For Thistle, moving out had to be strategically planned because her partner was not willing to let her leave. She said:

I've been away from him for, I'd say, five years, five and a half years. I left him when he went on a run when [the baby] was three days old and I was still in hospital and three days later I went home. We packed up the house and I left the day after. It was the only way I could leave him.

He couldn't find me. He didn't know where I was. Nobody was going to tell him. My close friends were the ones pushing me to go. And he wouldn't dare go to my parent's home or anything like that. He just knew it wouldn't get him anywhere. By the time I left him, people within the gang more or less knew what was in my mind anyway. He knew I didn't need him. He knew I didn't rely on him. His hold on me was very minute. It was probably just the emotional side of it that kept me there longer. There was something between us, but I don't know, when you have got a child to someone, you think, "Can I live with this, and ask is he going to change?" Every now and then you hear, "I'm going to fuckin' leave this scene," and it's bullshit, but you like to believe what they say for a while.

And as mentioned previously, Pansy ended up in hospital. From there she went into a women's refuge. On leaving refuge, Pansy secured a state house. It was high fenced and she managed to get two big dogs. She did not go out to buy groceries or to socialise in public for a considerable time. Although her partner was sent to jail for the suffering she endured, Pansy spent many years in seclusion, hiding as her partner's associates tried to look for her. When her partner was released from jail he continually hassled and threatened her. Police letters and other documents reveal that Pansy's life has been hell. Her initial attempts at getting help through counselling were too painful, but Pansy has now completed drug and alcohol

programmes, which have provided her with some much needed support. Gradually, she began to build up her confidence and self-esteem, but it has, she said, been 'a very long haul to home'.

Rose made changes after she was discharged from hospital after a suicide attempt. She too has attended counselling and AA sessions to help her put her past behind her. Part of Rose's healing was to write a short story about her time in the gang, the rapes and suicide attempt. Her story was published and she received a writer's award.¹ Rose has also been helped through her spirituality. She has become a Christian Spiritualist. Rose said that she came across a book called *The Twenty-four Hour Book*, which has provided her with guidance. The spiritualist philosophy provided Rose with a rationale and a framework through which she could reinterpret all that happened in her life. The negative aspects have become avenues of learning and growth. And through gaining an understanding of her own intuitive ability she has been able to build trust in herself and others. Her increased sense of self-worth along with the progress of time has allowed her to gain a sense of peace.

Violet left her partner a few times, and on one occasion she even went as far as Australia. Each time, however, she returned to her partner, hoping he had changed. Violet said that her partner had handed in his patch, and that indicated to her that he was committed to making different choices. The other gang members, however, had different ideas. They still hung around, they kept Violet's partner involved and whilst he had a job, he still got hooked into their deals. Violet had and continues to have the support of a close friend, who is always available to talk. It is acknowledged that Violet's partner has made some changes in his behaviour, but the going has been tough. Together, they have had to support each other. Even though he has not assaulted Violet for some time, she remains in a vulnerable position, hopeful, hanging in there on trust, trust that the changes he has made are the beginning of a journey towards a brighter future.

Daff did not discuss the process of leaving in any great detail. Like the other women, she had to be strong, determined, and resilient during the earlier stages of separation from her husband. She had hassles with access and some major custody issues to deal with. Unlike many of the other women, Daff had a strong supportive family and network of friends, which

¹ This writing I have seen, but it will not be referenced, as this would breach the confidentiality agreement.

included some of her partners' mates. In the end, Daff discovered some satisfaction in revenge. She washed his beloved gang patch and much to his horror, eventually disposed of it. Many years later, she still chuckles as she remembers his response to his patch's demise.

The Role of Religion in Change.

As can be seen, the role of religion has been significant in the process of change for many of the women interviewed. It is true that many people who join social movements or who become involved with a community network or religious community can secure a rapid and sudden change in their life (Hoffer, 1951, p.3). David Aberle (1996 cited in Giddens, 1997, pp.511-512) draws attention to four classifications of a social movement: transformative, reformatory, redemptive and alternative, that are known to facilitate personal and social change. *Religious conversion*, whether achieved through new religious movements or the more traditional religious institutions, draws together the process of change with a religious experience or a spiritual encounter (Gillespie, 1979, pp.3-43). The definitions of a religious conversion are many and varied, being influenced by "subjective standards or superficial manifestations" (ibid, p.5). For the purpose of the current discussion, the term *religious conversion* will be used to refer to a "subjective and private change of orientation and values" (ibid, p.36) through religious or spiritual allegiance.

Although the topic of religious conversion has been studied from several academic perspectives: theological, sociological, psychological, ethical and philosophical (Gillespie, 1979, p.8; Krailsheimer, 1980, p.2), there is very little mention of the influence of religious conversion with regards to disassociation from gang membership or decline in gang affiliation (Spergel, 1995, p.107). Internationally, it has been noted that evangelical Protestant ministers may facilitate the conversion of gang members through their prison and outreach programmes. There is, however, no statistical evidence of the frequency or success of conversion (Spergel, 1995, p.107) readily available. In New Zealand, as elsewhere, there is ample anecdotal evidence and the odd media article (see Appendix X) that would support an argument for research in this area.

In his research on the role of the gang in former members' lives, Lala (1996, pp.99, 116) found that half [4/8] of his participants were strongly engaged with some form of religion at

the time the interviews took place. These participants acknowledged that religion played a part in their departure from the gang lifestyle. As one of Lala's participants said:

The Christian faith has given me a sense of worth. It's given me a lot more hope than I had before. It's kept me out of jail; it's kept me on the straight and narrow.
(Api, 1996 cited in Lala, 1996, p.99)

While also acknowledging the need for further investigation, Lala argued that religion may provide a vehicle through which gang members can "develop a new social self-concept" (Lala, 1996, p.116).

Eric Hoffer (1951, pp. 19-53) argued that those who were susceptible to joining social and religious movements are the "the disaffected" (ibid, p.24), who are most frequently the:

...(a) the poor, (b) misfits, (c) outcasts, (d) minorities, (e) adolescent youth, (f) the ambitious (whether facing insurmountable obstacles or unlimited opportunities), (g) those in the grip of some vice or obsession, (h) the impotent (in body or mind), (i) the inordinately selfish, (j) the bored, (k) the sinners.
(Hoffer, 1951, p.24)

In modern times, gang members and their associates, drug addicts, glue sniffers, street kids, and men or women immersed in violent relationships would also fit comfortably into Hoffer's categories. Also mentioned are the vulnerable, those of ill health and the "victims of any persecution or privation" (Krailshimer, 1980, p.155). This last group would include most of the women interviewed in this study, as victims of violence and abuse. It has also noted that the factors precipitating religious conversion include emotional confusion or disturbance, and a sense of isolation, or loneliness, even in the midst of friends. Other stressful circumstances, for example tensions and frustrations within family or previous peer networks, and/or estrangement in marital or parent-child relationships, are also known to facilitate religious conversion (ibid, p.152-155).

Religious communities and networks, particularly those with a high degree of internal orientation that replicates a 'family feeling', offer converts a sense of identity and belonging as well as friendship. The central philosophy or doctrine of the group generally provides converts with a set of beliefs and values, which provides not only a framework for living, but also a means to reinterpret the past (Gillespie, 1979, p.32). Within the new environment, experiences of victimisation and suffering, or conversely, shame and guilt, then take on new meaning and ease or eliminate the convert's previous emotional burdens. Often the experience

is so profound that converts become malleable, especially by the leaders of these particular groups or religious communities who sometimes promote self-sacrifice for their cause.

Many converts become ardent followers, sharing their emancipation, giving all credit to God for the life changing experiences that He provided, and they then attract other disaffiliates to the cause. Whether this is a healthy process in the long-term or not, it is not my place to judge. All the women I talked to in this regard, have been able to find a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives, and are obviously making different choices which will inevitably have a positive flow-on effect to their children and their associates. What is of concern is the question of sustainability, and whether or not the changes made, and the new support system either last or pave the way to long-term fulfilment and security. It is clear that religious allegiance provides the same benefit as gangs: a sense of identity, a sense of belonging, and a framework for living. Should the new support system become fragmented, collapse through corruption or merely fade into eternity, what then becomes of those in need of this type of support? Going by Hoffer's observations, those who cannot muster faith in themselves will merely flounder until another system of support fulfils the disaffiliated's needs. He argued:

Faith in a holy cause is to a considerable extent a substitute for the lost faith in ourselves.

(Hoffer, 1951, p.14)

And this may be so, but in this study as in Lala's research, religious conversion needs to be given some credit for facilitating the dramatic changes that occurred. Further research into the dynamics of religious conversion among gang members and their affiliates may provide clues to the mechanisms needed to promote safer, healthier lifestyles for a greater number people who want to leave the gang environment.

The Problem with Personal Counselling.

It is clear that the women interviewed had difficulty finding counsellors who not only appreciated and understood the gang-related women's experience, but who also were aware of how the gang cultural and collective dynamics impacted on their lives. From discussions with the women interviewed, the religious conversions discussed above were a less harrowing experience than individual counselling. The people, ministers or lay preachers, who supported the conversions were able to convey an understanding the gang-related women's reality and experience. For Cohen and Taylor (1993, p.148), therapy, - psychotherapy, cognitive-

behavioural therapy, narrative therapy, Gestalt therapy, person-centred or focus counselling, or whatever, - is an “institutionalised escape route.” The therapeutic interventions provide a vehicle through which liberation can be achieved with a change in consciousness that opens “up the windows to an alternative reality” (ibid, p.150). These ‘escapes’ are purposely constructed to redefine or reconstruct the meaning of an experience, especially the more negative ones.

The problem that Cohen and Taylor allude to, is that while therapeutic practice offers an escape from reality, or an environment from which reality can be explored, they do not constitute escapes from reality per se (ibid, p.151). Often the client has to return to the family, work or in this case, to the gang scene where the problems are real. And if, as the women interviewed in this study indicate, the therapist/counsellor does not understand the gang world, s/he will not even be able to facilitate a temporary escape route for the client, much less a permanent one.

Furthermore, in terms of resocialisation, individual counselling or therapy is a lonely journey. The client wanting to pull away from the gang scene, in many cases has to make that journey alone. Although the therapist may offer a sympathetic ear, therapists do not usually generate a trusting support system that religious allegiance provides. Nor does counselling/therapy provide the client, and in this case the gang-related woman, with a ready-made framework for daily living. Those women in this study who did receive counselling emerged out of the process still feeling vulnerable and isolated. They had embarked on a long, lonely journey.

Life After the Gang.

Most of the women interviewed indicated they were happy with the life at the time of the interview. All the women are now able to reflect back on their time with the gang with a mixture of memories, some good but more often, bad. While there are some regrets, most of these women acknowledge that their experiences within the gang have contributed to their sense of self, or the person that they are today, and most have an empathy, compassion and understanding to those, male and female, who remain behind with the gang. It is clear that they are *not* bound up with completely negative attitudes towards gang members in general, or towards the particular men who assaulted them.

Only two of the women were still negotiating a better future and although feeling a little apprehensive about their situations at the time of the interviews, they reported to me that they were happy with the changes made thus far. All the women felt that their experiences within the gang culture had provided a source of strength and motivation. Not one woman, while understanding a woman's attraction towards gang members and gangs, ever envisaged herself getting caught up in a similar type scenario. They, including those who have remained with their partners, have more independence than before.

Today, nearly all the women are interested in furthering their education and many have become involved in helping others overcome difficulties in their lives. They offer practical assistance, understanding and ongoing support to those with burdens that cross their paths. As previously indicated in her profile, Rose has begun to complete university papers and she helps others at AA meetings and through her work with community agencies. Daff has almost completed her undergraduate degree. She is currently managing a community group that assists the long-term unemployed and the so-called unemployable, including former and present gang members, some with full face tattoos, to gain work experience. Jasmine and Daisy have completed courses in institutions that offer community work and helping skills training, and at the time of the interview were actively engaged in community work.

Pansy and Lily have contemplated furthering their education, again in the social service/community work area. Pansy would like to work with disabled children. Her disabilities sustained through gang violence have prompted an understanding of the everyday obstacles that they must navigate. Lily hopes to return to school. She wants to complete tertiary papers so she can gain employment that allows her to work with families that are in strife.

Thistle was recuperating at the time of the interview, on crutches and nursing a broken leg [from a non-gang related accident]. She was sure that she would be back at her job in no time. Rhodo was occupied with her small children and did not contemplate a return to work for some time. She was aware of a number of contradictions in her life, and was about to take steps to deal with them. Freesia and Violet did not really provide an insight into their future journeys, but made it clear that the road they were on was the road on which they planned to stay. Like the other gang-related women interviewed, their *troubled journeys* will soon come to an end.

CHAPTER NINE:

CONCLUSION.

Introduction.

In accepting that the research on gangs in New Zealand has been limited, and that little has been done to develop an understanding of gang-related women both here and at an international level, the current qualitative study has been carried out as an attempt to generate insights into, and an appreciation of, women's reality and experience within New Zealand gangs. To do so, I carried out semi-structured, conversational interviews with ten gang-related women who were previously connected to a selection of New Zealand gangs; the Mongrel Mob, Black Power, Highway 61, the Road Knights, the Filthy Few, the Stormtroopers and the Mothers. Formal interviews and informal discussions also were held with other gang-related women who wish to remain anonymous, former gang members, current gang members or associates, police and social service workers. Subsequently, these additional conversations have been useful for reliability and validation purposes. Throughout this project, I have explored and shared the lives of Lily, Jasmine, Daff, Rhodo, Thistle, Daisy, Freesia, Rose, Violet, and Pansy, all women who were connected to the gang scene for a period time ranging between two and one half years to around thirty-five years. Nine were partners of gang members and the tenth woman was married to a gang associate and has had long-time connections with the gangs on a number of levels. Through sharing their reality and experience, as they moved into and later, out of the gang culture, I have presented an analysis their journeys and lives within the gang scene.

From the data gathered, I have written mini life profiles that give a general overview of the women's lives as they were reported to me. These profiles are reasonably self-explanatory as they convey a strong message on their own. From this base, I explored the antecedent factors and personal motivations that led the women towards gang affiliation, and the interactions or processes involved when they initially made contact with the gang. Further to this, I have illustrated how the gang structure impacts on women in gangs, particularly in terms of their coming to accept a marginal position and role. And in allowing the women to 'speak' for themselves, to a large degree, I have generated an understanding of how some gang-related women interpret their role, and make sense of their world.

Antecedent and Motivational Factors in Female Gang Affiliation.

Consistent with the international data, I have demonstrated that the majority of the gang-related women interviewed were 'at risk' of gang affiliation during their formative years. Many had come from working class families, and while none complained of abject poverty, there was much talk of struggling to make ends meet or getting by. More often than not, the women came from troubled families and had reported witnessing or hearing domestic violence and abuse. Some women reported being sexually and/or physically abused while others experienced abusive forms of discipline. Some women discussed having to struggle with their parents' marital problems, and/or parental substance abuse and addictions. Many women talked about the effects of parental absence, in either the physical or emotional sense, during their childhood and two had difficulty coming to terms with their mothers' employment within the sex industry.

These troubled families did not facilitate a strong sense of belonging, security or connectedness in the women and many reported that they felt safer when away from the family home during their childhood. Only one woman stood out as coming from a warm, supportive and trusting family, where no abuse was encountered. In eight of the ten cases discussed, the family situation did not facilitate educational achievement. Many of the women only just made it through part of the fifth form and only one of the ten women interviewed had entered the sixth form. Some reported school truancy, while others stopped attending school while running away from home. For two of the women interviewed, gang rape had disrupted their lives and educational achievements. For them, gang rape was their introduction to many years of gang life.

This research supports frequent calls in our society for the fostering of supportive and nurturing environments for our children, and indicates the need for change in the social structure to reduce the problems of social inequality. High unemployment, racism and gender inequalities all contribute to stress within the family unit, which then has a negative impact on children's formative years. We need further to address the issue of domestic/family violence for ultimately it is the children who suffer. Finding better ways to support children through the trauma that they experience when domestic/family violence occurs or when they have been physically and/or sexually abused is a priority. Not one child should have to carry this type of burden alone.

We need to educate adolescents, parents, and the community at large about the long-term negative impact of violence within the family context and our community, and while holding perpetrators accountable for their actions, we need to foster programmes that encourage non-violent interactions and problem solving strategies. Likewise, we need to better support for children with parents who struggle with drug and alcohol abuse and/or addictions. In some respects, many of the women interviewed, as children were 'pushed' into the gang scene as they looked for an escape, some respite and protection from the abuses that they were made to experience during childhood. And it is not simply girls that we need to consider in this regard. The women's comments about the sad and horrific backgrounds of some of their men and data from previous research on gangs indicate that similar risk factors are present for many boys who have become involved in gangs.

For all but one woman, gang affiliation began through connections with family or friends who had already established a relationship of some sort with a gang. For those with family members who were already affiliated, gang connections were easily forged. These findings are consistent with, and reinforce previous research findings. This is an area of gang research that needs further exploration, not only to explore the long-term ramifications of continued family involvement with a gang for the individuals concerned, but also with regards to the social implications. We also need to further understand the social, ethnic and gender dynamics involved which facilitate family commitment to a particular gang. This is particularly relevant to New Zealand society, as our two largest ethnic gangs, Black Power and the Mongrel Mob, and Highway 61 motorcycle gang are known to have families involved with three generations maintaining a level of commitment to the gang concerned.

Personal Motivations that Support Gang Affiliation.

Although personal motives towards gang affiliation and active involvement differed from woman to woman, talk along the lines of protection, security and excitement or fun during the interviews emerged as strong personal motivations. In many respects, these motives were connected to troubles within their families of origin. For example, for three women, gang association was considered as merely a natural progression from the street kid/runaway position. And while eight of the women interviewed acknowledged a rebellious spirit, rebellion against the stresses, the rejection, the hurt and the fear generated within the troubled families played a huge part in the movement towards gang affiliation. Only one woman stated that she had no personal motivation towards gangs or gang members; she was gang raped.

The others, particularly those with a rebellious spirit, often perceived the gang as a means of excitement, fun and adventure. These attributes were a sharp contrast to the misery that had clouded many of the women's childhood memories.

Initially, the gang provided a sense of freedom and plenty good times. Some women talked about the easy access to drugs and ample supplies of alcohol at parties, with good bands and music. For a short time they were able to forget the troubles that they had previously endured. As I have illustrated, though, and as supported by the previous research, these good times did not last. The talk and images presented about freedom and the good times were soon replaced with revelations about abuse, degradation, humiliation, shame, and strong feelings of isolation.

In addition to themes of excitement and fun, five of the women sought the protection of a macho type male, and the gang provided a ready supply of them. And nine of the ten women referred to the gang as initially providing a source of protection and security. For many, the gang became a substitute family. It provided the whanau feeling, a sense of belonging and acceptance during the initial phases of contact. Some of the women stated that they were actually looking for 'real' men, while others discussed, retrospectively, needing, wanting and looking for security in their lives. These personal motivations towards gang affiliation again reinforce the need to build strong supportive caring families in which children and young adolescents feel secure. Again family orientated outreach programmes may be beneficial here. And an exploration of the international gang prevention initiatives may provide the New Zealand social service sector with useful, tried and tested strategies, and expertise in the gang prevention area.

Learning the Rules and the Role of Women.

This research has provided insights into the role of women within the New Zealand context, and has identified some of the processes through which girls/women are socialised to accept a marginal and subservient role within the gangs. Having been watched by those already socialised to conform to the gang culture, and having stayed connected long enough to become accepted as a partner of a gang member, all women reported having to learn the 'rules of the game'. And gradually, the reality of the gang culture began to come clear and shattered hope of achieving freedom, adventure, excitement and thrill. This is a sharp contrast to the old

myths that depict gang-related women as wild, loose and fancy-free, who, without being bounded by traditional social norms and values, enjoy the good times to no end.

Instead, the women interviewed provided graphic evidence of various forms of violence, and abuse that were employed to 'educate' the women in gang culture. As demonstrated, the gang culture was no escape from the traditional gender assumptions and roles that still operate to a large degree within the wider social environment. The tactics of oppression are the same used by some men who seek to control women, partners or otherwise, across society. Within the gang culture, however, the system, not being challenged by the rise of feminism or women's right's groups, is more pervasively entrenched and overtly practiced.

The women are thus socialised prior to, and during the initial stages of gang involvement to accept a position that is inferior and subservient to men. Women are there to cook, to clean, to look after the children and to be at their men's beck and call. The gang-related women in this study confirm that women are indeed marginalised in gangs, although, there is some variability within this marginalised status. The 'good girl' versus 'bad girl' differentiation between women has been, and is reinforced. Partners of gang members are expected to fall into the 'good girl' category. If not, their men retain an assumed right to punish them or to 'teach them a lesson'. A good 'missus'/'cook' will do as she is told, she will not belittle her man, she will not make him appear weak in front of other gang members by challenging his authority, and while having to accept his infidelities, she will remain sexually loyal to him. Sexual promiscuity or 'screwing around' by female partners of gang members is rejected, and punishable. Inappropriate sexual behaviour by a partner of a gang member can reduce her status to that of a 'bad girl' and she will then be considered as an 'entertainment piece', readily available to any male within the gang scene.

For some women in gangs, status depends on the status and reputation of their men. If a gang member is well respected as one of the gang hierarchy, for his talent and skill as a fighter and/or for his courage in the face of the police, rival gang members and other foes, then his partner will also be considered with a degree of respect. And if she 'behaves herself', that is if she generally knows her place and role, she will be more respected by the other males and will basically be left alone. At times, some of these women have been known to adopt a position of power, particularly if they are able to strategise through their partner to secure their own personal needs and agenda.

On the other hand, 'bad girls', whether they be called 'dirty girls', 'gang molls', 'crew shags' or any other derogatory term, are considered as entertainment for the men. The men tend to isolate their partners from these 'bad girls', and as the women interviewed reported, female partners of gang members certainly distrust these *other* women because of the threat they present to their relationships. Women as partners of gang members tend to reinforce the distinction between women within the gang culture in their attempts to create a relatively safe environment for themselves and their children. They strategise and compromise, or engage in patriarchal bargains, to make their lives more tolerable. But in the attempts, they actually collude with their men and help maintain abusive practices that occur within the gangs. Through minimising and denying the abuse and degradation of themselves and other women, through blaming themselves or the 'bad girls' for the abuses and degradation that they are sometimes subjected to, gang related women tend to support the status quo. Thus, partners of gang members find themselves in a contradictory position where they both object to, and participate in the abuse of women. And as gang-related women find it difficult to trust *other* women within the gang context it is difficult for them to come together and collectively challenge the marginalisation and abuse of women within gangs.

These research findings are similar to other recent studies carried out that have tried to explain why and how some women participate in, and collude with gender oppression while, at the same time, they attempt to resist or reject it (for example, Kandiyoti, 1988; Miller, 1998b, Sanday, 1990). Because gender oppression is strong and persistent within the criminal and gang cultures, these settings offer a context in which a more in depth analysis of gender dynamics may be facilitated. This may help to uncover and aid our understandings of some of the more covert or hidden factors, such as women's role in perpetuating the status quo. The gang situation, as illustrated in this study, also facilitates an awareness of circumstances and conditions, individual and social, that operate to hold some women back from joining their 'sisters' in the collective fight for female emancipation.

Male Tactics of Power and Control.

By drawing on the Deluth Abuse Intervention Project Power and Control Model, this research project has generated a vivid example of how the tactics of power and control are adopted and used by male gang members in the oppression of their women. These tactics cover a wide range of both overt and hidden behaviours that have a huge impact, both directly and indirectly, on the women involved. I have shown how extreme violence, coercion, threats, and

intimidation, as well as the subtle, and not so subtle, forms of emotional or psychological abuse contribute to the overall control of women within gangs. Further to this, I have illustrated how the collective dynamics of the gang further exacerbate these forms of control and make their overall delivery easier to achieve, and to go undetected or unchallenged to any great degree. And the decision on gang rape has helped to stress this point. In doing so, I have illustrated major elements of the gang culture in New Zealand that not only influence the way gang-related women make sense of their lives and world, but also contribute to the meaning that they give to their world and lives. Understanding these complexities will aid those in helping fields, who sometimes struggle in their attempts to come to terms with the gang women's reality, when assisting the gang-related women who seek to make changes in their lives.

What this research does not answer, is the question of why do the men, having mostly come from similar backgrounds of powerlessness and vulnerability, collude as aggressors against girls/women who for the most part have considerable understanding and compassion for the gang man's lot. Some of the women interviewed stated that the gang culture also provides some men with a source of belonging, acceptance and security, an escape from, and a form of resistance to their tormented pasts. This is also validated in the international data gathered on male gang involvement.

This raises questions about the need to be responsive to male powerlessness, and the contradictions that arise when, for all intents and purposes, they are 'supposed' to be powerful, and have control. In their attempts to gain and maintain control of their lives the men, more often than not, resort to violence and abuse to ward off any potential threat, to allay their insecurities and to confirm their masculinity. As the women interviewed challenged, it is *too simple* just to blame the men, we need an overall understanding, before changes can be, or will be eventuated. And I have demonstrated that gang members, like non-gang males, who are violent and abusive towards their partners and children, are not too dissimilar. It is the collective dynamics of the gang that exacerbates the nature and the degree of the violence and abuse that does occur.

Restraints to Leaving a Gang Member Partner or the Gang Scene.

Many of the women interviewed came to accept the gang culture and more particularly, the violence as 'just a fact of life'. And this was particularly so when the women had become

isolated from their families, and the community at large. As their self-esteem plummeted, as a result of degradation and abuse, these women found it more and more difficult to leave. The concepts and knowledge arising out of the psychological theories of learned helplessness and battered women's syndrome, partly answer the question as to why the women stayed in these dangerous relationships. But as previously indicated many other social factors combine with individual psychological variables to keep women stuck within the gang scene. These factors include the fear of reprisal from the gang, the consequences of narking or going to the police, the lack of money, having nowhere safe to go, having a lack of faith in the law enforcement agencies to provide protection for gang-related women and isolation from the community at large.

Leaving an abusive gang-member partner, though difficult, is not altogether impossible. This is the strong message that the gang-related women wanted to convey. Although the journey is often a long, lonely and scary one to embark upon, and there are many barriers to overcome. All the women interviewed have demonstrated that it can be done, but no two women made the same journey. Their decisions to leave were often well thought through. Fraught with difficulties, the women weighed up all the pros and cons, sometimes over and over again. Sometimes the final decision to leave was made in times of crisis, and sometimes in life or death situations, but once they had finally made that tough decision, they left. Others bided time, before cautiously making a move. For other women life took a turn for the better when their partners were imprisoned, or when their men had decided gang life was not all that they had thought it would be.

As the women conveyed their stories and their *troubled journeys* it became clear that there was little or no support for women seeking to leave gang situations behind. Individual counselling had a limited effect in facilitating positive changes for the women concerned. Basically the journey must be travelled alone and when away from the counsellors' rooms the women had no practical support. For some, religious affiliation seemed to have produced an easier and a safer outcome. It became apparent that religious affiliation supported dramatic turn around lifestyle changes through the provision of a strong friendship network, and primary group support, - replacement for the gang family, which sometimes built bridges between individuals and their family of origin. These spiritual groups and networks not only provided practical support and friendship during times of despair and vulnerability, they also

offered an alternative ideological framework making sense of the events that had occurred in their lives. And as Jasmine explained, religion gave her a map for life.

Regardless of how the change eventually came to be, all the women have gained a strong sense of power and self-determination through their experiences. The process of leaving has in itself given these women a source of courage and power. They have had an opportunity to look back on their own lives, and now share their learnings with others.

Many of the women have returned to the education system and seek to gain employment in the helping area assisting others whose lives have taken a detour down a rough and dangerous road. These are strong, resilient women who are all now seeking to make a difference in the lives of others. And that is why they have shared their *troubled journeys* with us. They hope that doing so will foster a wider understanding of the gang culture so others who struggle in similar positions will eventually have the courage to make changes in their lives. They want to challenge those in the helping industry to reflect on their attitude towards gang-related girls and women, as well as their practices and policies that relate the gang-women's plight. For just as not one child should be made to struggle through life's hurdles alone, our 'sisters' from the gang world, should not have to struggle on their own, or be rejected and pushed into deeper isolation and despair when they reach out for help.

*Te ohonga ake I taku moemoea,
ko te puawaitanga
o nga whakaaro.*

*I awoke from my dream, to the blossoming of my thought.
Dreams become reality when we take action.
(Ruth Tai, 1992)*

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX I:

THE RESEARCHER: THE GANG IN MY LIFE.

The women's stories are a reflection of my own story, as I too have come from a troubled background. I do not know my natural father, I acknowledge an abusive and alcoholic stepfather, and I left school six weeks into the fourth form. Life was just a matter for survival, women got by the best you could, and made the most of what they had, my mother had often conveyed. And like most rebels, I did not appreciate the message behind her reflections. When I left home, a relatively young teenager-come-adult, I generally partied up and had a good time, and being well socialised to accept the traditional gender assumptions and roles, I soon found myself a man who was supposed to look after me. That was a *big mistake!* Within a short time, as will be illustrated, I had to begin to take some responsibility for my own safety and life's direction. I share the following snippet from my life here because it was this *troubled journey* that has made this research project possible, and this background inevitably has bearing on the research process and the analysis presented.

I met and married my husband, referred to here as Kotahikawa (the bitter one), during the early 1970s. He was intelligent, reasonably good-looking and always dressed well. At that time he was employed in the area of telecommunications, and was studying at a tertiary level to further his future employment prospects while I worked as a factory hand in a poultry-processing plant. Together, we worked and saved to build our own home and by all accounts he was considered 'a Maori who had made it in the Pakeha world', unlike many of his acquaintances and friends who were struggling to secure work and find a positive direction in their lives.

Included amongst his close friends were several patched motorcycle club members. One member, later killed in a motorcycle accident, had grown up with Kotahikawa in a small rural community near a hydro-based resource township. Several of the other patched gang members and associates were also raised in small rural townships. During the late 1960s and early 1970s many of these men had moved to the city looking for greater employment opportunities and the promise of a more secure lifestyle. They tended to congregate together for companionship and support, and in some respects were almost like an extended family to

each other. My partner and I used to socialise and get together with these people for special occasions. For example, at Christmas time, dinner for the family often included twenty or so people, including gang members, from 'back home'.

As the Christchurch chapter of the gang grew, Kotahikawa developed an interest in the big bikes -Triumphs and the Nortons- and eventually he bought his own motorbike, which he later modified. 'Ape-hanger' handlebars and imitation 'kraut' helmets were all the rage. Once he had a bike himself his involvement with the gang increased, Kotahikawa started attending club meetings and paying membership fees. In a sense he was a gang prospect, proving his allegiance to the gang, although he did not appear to be treated like a prospect or get ordered around because of his earlier friendships with some of the gang's members. At that stage, I had no real concerns about his involvement.

In the beginning I saw Kotahikawa's activity with the gang as a bit of fun and excitement, an escape from the mundane routine of going to work, coming home, cleaning the house and using weekend time to catch up on any unfinished household chores. Having a rebellious, non-conformist nature myself in my younger days, venturing down to the gang headquarters was intriguing. But within a few months, I became aware of some emerging contradictions in my life, although at that time, these were discarded from my mind. The following scenario illustrates the type of situation, which began frequently to emerge:

One day back in the late 1970s when I drove down a busy, central Christchurch street I was forced to stop by cops in two police cars. One car had manoeuvred in front of me and the other had managed to merge through the traffic so it was beside me. As I stopped the car another police car had moved in behind me. The cops ordered me and my passengers, five patched motorcycle club members, out of the car and I felt a wave of contempt as I stood and watched them search through the car, in every hiding place one could imagine. I was scared, but I was also was buzzing with a sense of thrill and excitement. After being questioned about where we had been, what we had been doing and so on the cops finally decided to let us move on. And they had no choice, in this particular instance, because I was driving, I had not been drinking and they had found nothing incriminating in our possession. As I started up the car we laughed at the cops' stupidity, they were given a few derogatory salutations as we departed joyous at their powerlessness and we went, escorted by one of the police cars, back to the 'pad', or club house.

Yes, they had reason to stop us. The boys had been boozing at a few of the local pubs after having spent the afternoon visiting club mates slammed up in jail. In one of the pubs a rumble had erupted and during this someone was stabbed in the throat

with a crudely re-shaped fork. He was still alive but only just, and I clearly remember being told by one of the cops that this man was 'drowning in his own blood'. I managed to ignore these words, minimised the seriousness of what had occurred and just carried on with my job at the time. I was taking my passengers back to the pad, where I was to pick up some other, sober club members and take them back to the pub. The cops were stopping club members who had been drinking from leaving on their bikes. This new group of passengers was to bring the bikes back to the pad while I uplifted the remaining boys. The cops stood by and watched, knowing that there was nothing they could do to hold the boys any longer.

Back at the pad there was a reminiscing of the day's events, and some concern for the poor guy choking in his own blood. But generally there was a sense of excitement, a strange mixture of thrill and relief, a bit like when one steps off a roller coaster. No one got 'done' or arrested, and the cops were left relatively powerless. That night, however, I lay in bed thinking about the injured man, his partner and children, and the consequences for them if he did die. I too was a wife, and a mother, who depended largely on the man who lay beside me in the bed. 'How would it be for her, trying to get by on her own? How would I feel if I was in her position, with my man on the brink of death? Hmmm, perhaps she'd be better off without him! He was probably just another abusive prick,' I thought. I woke up the next morning, still tired from my restless night and put the night's events behind me as I rushed off to work. I had no time, or wish to dwell on the apparent contradictions or complexities in my life. There were too many other things to get done. At the time, that's just the way things were. I decided to let things ride.

As the months passed by, however, I found it increasingly difficult to ignore the complexities and contradictions that arose. While the gang members generally treated me with respect, many women were not. Often, several gang members raped women and this made me very uncomfortable. On one occasion a rape came to the attention of the media and I became sickened with a deep sense of shame for being associated with men who condoned such actions. Yet, at the same time I found myself making excuses or justifying their actions. I did not believe the rationalisations given at the time by gang members and some of their partners: "she asked for it", "she should not have been at the clubrooms in the first place", "she was drunk and being promiscuous". But I accepted them. These explanations were easier to deal with than the doubts that emerged about my own partner and my life after this event. He certainly did not object to or challenge his club mates and this made me question whether he might have done the same himself. In hindsight, I realise that it was far easier to blame the woman concerned than to contemplate the possibilities in this regard. I just did not want to know.

Another aspect of gang life that concerned me was being associated with men, and women, who had no qualms about being involved in theft or burglaries. On one occasion, for example, I remember feeling extremely guilty when two large packing cases were placed in our garage. These contained a Harley Davidson motorcycle that had been dismantled and packed to make its transportation easier and more discreet. Through the media, I learned that this bike had been stolen from a tourist and that the police were following up leads as to its whereabouts. I also heard gang members discussing the theft – when, where and how it was stolen - which confirmed my initial suspicions that it was on our property. They talked and bragged about how they had outwitted the police who had turned up and executed search warrants at a couple of gang member's homes, but had failed to find the bike. This was only because it had been shifted to our place moments before the police arrived at these other houses. These gang members and Kotahikawa joked and laughed about the bike being under the police's noses because we had a detective living next door.

Knowing this bike was in our garage until it was shifted on caused me considerable concern. I knew Kotahikawa had not stolen the bike, but he would have been charged over it if the police had found it while it was on our property. A charge of theft or receiving stolen property would have placed his job and our financial security in jeopardy. Part of Kotahikawa's commitment to his gang member friends was to help out in times of trouble and I hated this. He could be called on at any time to honour such favours. I was working at this time and I remember my colleagues talking about this stolen bike and the plight of the tourist who was the victim of this crime. I felt sick inside. If only they knew it was in my garage. Having some sympathetic feeling towards the tourist, I wanted to phone the police anonymously, to let them know where it was, but I did not. I already knew about the code of silence, and that I had to keep quite or be labelled a nark. And that is something I certainly was not going to be as I had heard the stories about how narks were treated. I was truly relieved when that bike was moved on to some other destination because only then could I put my concerns aside.

Along with the stress and worry about stolen property there was the generalised violence to consider. Kotahikawa was no stranger to violence. He had grown up with family punch-ups, had passed through the youth violence stage and had been involved in the pub brawls. As he had managed to avoid conflict with the law around such violence, I merely accepted it as a part of this man's world. It was essentially nothing for me to stand back and watch men in pugilistic combat. My main concern, as I remember, was whether or not Kotahikawa's shirt

would get torn or become covered in stubborn, difficult to remove, bloodstains. Besides, Kotahikawa had earned himself a reputation as someone who would defend himself, his family and his friends, which was generally considered a positive characteristic in our circle, as well as many others.

The gang's members certainly respected Kotahikawa for his 'don't mess with me' attitude and demeanour. I remember seeing a patched member, who did not know much about Kotahikawa's background, swipe a newly lit cigarette out of Kotahikawa's mouth. Kotahikawa quietly told this person to give it back, but he refused. In an instant this person was lying on the floor. Kotahikawa had knocked him out with one punch. The atmosphere in the room froze. We were in the bar of the gang's clubhouse, and a wave of apprehension and silence seemed to hold everyone in its grasp. I thought Kotahikawa had blown it, as he had not shown the proper respect expected towards a fully patched member. But, the silence was broken when one of Kotahikawa's long term friends helped this gang member up off the floor and called him a "fuckin' egg" for trying to take Kotahikawa on like that.

Kotahikawa and his friends joked and laughed, they talked about the 'king hit' and Kotahikawa was bought another jug of beer for his efforts. Once the tension died down, I relaxed, bought myself another drink and listened to the beat of Bob Marley singing *No Woman, No Cry* pounding through the sound system. There were no ramifications for me this time, no torn shirts or bloodstains to get rid of, so what the heck, boys will be boys and the music simply wiped the many possible outcomes of this scenario out of my mind.

During December 1981, however, things changed and I no longer saw the ability to fight as being positive in any regard. Kotahikawa was involved in a motor vehicle accident. The driver of a car, having not seen Kotahikawa coming, failed to give way before making a right hand turn in front of the bike. A twelve-year-old girl, a passenger in the car that collided into Kotahikawa's motorcycle, died. Kotahikawa sustained serious head injuries, a broken jaw, a broken leg and he had lost so much blood that his heart stopped pumping and the doctor at the accident scene pronounced Kotahikawa dead and covered him completely with a sheet. However, he was still barely alive as once he was placed in the ambulance another bikie, who had been sitting with Kotahikawa, noticed him move ever so slightly. Kotahikawa spent several weeks in hospital before he returned home to recover fully.

After that accident, Kotahikawa was never the same. He changed dramatically, became highly suspicious, moody and aggressive. In some respects he reminded me of a caged animal, frustrated that there was no escape from the confines of the cage. In Kotahikawa's case it was the confines of his injuries and his gang associations that, I believe, exacerbated his negative beliefs, attitudes, moods and feelings at that time. It was not long before I became the target of his violent outbursts.

Initially I had thought that Kotahikawa's aggressive and violent moods would subside once he recovered fully, but I was mistaken. In reality his violence, condoned and supported by the gang culture, increased dramatically. He became extremely controlling of my life. About one year after the accident another gang member killed his partner. During a particularly nasty argument her partner, who wore steel-capped boots, had kicked her. Having sustained serious head injuries, she slipped into a deep coma and died several hours later. I cried and mourned for this woman as, after Kotahikawa's accident, I too had felt the pain and anguish that accompanies being kicked by a partner wearing steel-caps. While I grieved for the loss of this woman and for the pain that her family felt another part of me envied her in her death. For her the pain was over. There would be no more violence, no more black eyes, no more terror and no more trying to dodge those steel capped boots. I envied her peace. I also became angry at the justifications that emerged after this woman's funeral, which supported her killer's actions. All the blame was put on her. "She asked for it," I was repeatedly told. And I heard lots of sympathy from gang members for the man who killed her, especially when he was sentenced to several years in prison for manslaughter. It soon became clear that many of the other women were angry, they talked among themselves, but on the whole remained generally silent in their responses, just like me. Some even supported the men's feeble excuses for their comrade. At times I wanted to believe them too, but I could no longer hide myself from the reality of my life. I struggled in a sea of contradiction, sometimes blaming myself for the beatings I got and searching for ways I could change, and sometimes refusing to accept the responsibility for Kotahikawa's moods and violent actions.

Kotahikawa, however, took this woman's death as a benchmark from which he could compare his own violence, which he considered comparatively moderate. I was regularly reminded that I was lucky and that I should be grateful for this privilege. After all, I had only been beaten up and had lost a tooth. I still had my life. Who was I to complain, having been

granted such mercy? In this environment Kotahikawa's violence escalated and life became unbearable.

I stayed with Kotahikawa for several years believing that there was no way out of the mess that I was in. I no longer worked and had no income of my own, I had become isolated from my family and friends, and I thought that I had no where to go. I had also become confused about my feelings for Kotahikawa, which made deciding to leave difficult. On the one hand, I believed that I loved him and felt sorry for him after his accident. On the other hand, I hated him and went through phases where I hoped he would go out and never return. I was also plagued by fear. Kotahikawa had threatened to kill me if I left or went to the police.

On one occasion I went into a Women's Refuge safe house and while I was there someone connected to a North Island chapter of Kotahikawa's gang phoned my elderly mother who lived by herself. She was threatened and intimidated having been told to make sure that I got myself home or they would pay her 'a visit'. My mother was beside herself, not knowing what to do and wondering why someone would threaten her like that. She did not know I had left and she had no idea of where I was. Within a short time I heard about this phone call and feeling concerned for my mother's safety I returned to Kotahikawa.

Taking notice of this intimidation and returning home was probably the worst decision that I had made as Kotahikawa knew that I now wanted to find a way to end our marriage. The extent of his violence got worse and I was a regular visitor to the Accident and Emergency Department of Christchurch Hospital with a tooth knocked out, split lips, or cuts needing sutures. Each time I went there, Kotahikawa attended to make sure I did not disclose what had happened. Some of the staff obviously knew and tried to question me, but it was a delicate situation for all involved and no one ever pressured me enough to let on. I generally explained the bruises as being the result of my own clumsiness.

The final time that I ended up at the Accident and Emergency Department, however, no one needed to ask questions. As I collapsed a doctor tried to check my blood pressure, all was revealed. My body was covered in bruising and lacerations made with a kitchen knife. The doctors refused to let Kotahikawa in to where I was being treated and I was able to tell what had been going on, although I was initially reluctant to do so in case I changed my mind and returned home. Once I had disclosed there could be no turning back, of this I was sure. I knew

that the certainty of further beatings was real and for some reason, probably because I was emotionally exhausted, I started having thoughts about dying if I returned home. Scared stiff about what was going to happen, I took the irreversible step of allowing the doctors to call the police. Having originally charged Kotahikawa with wounding with intent, Detective Lester had given me some space to think about my life. During the court proceedings six additional charges were laid; four charges of injuring with intent, one of disfiguring with intent to injure and another charge of wounding with intent.

While it could be argued that the violence Kotahikawa used against me was similar to that of many other women who have experienced serious assaults from their non-gang partners, I now believe that the gang's context and influence played a significant part in the experiences that I endured. I suggest that the gang's culture worked to shape my reality, which then becomes an impediment to securing a non-violent life. After a long period on healing, and getting on with my life, I have come to believe that gang-related women are often misunderstood, and like that of 'battered women', their stories need to be told and understood so we can then begin to work for change. My story was to become the pathway, opening the doors so that this study could take place.

APPENDIX II:

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF GANGS IN NEW ZEALAND

Colonial Period: Murder and Mayhem.

Gangs are social phenomena that have been a part of New Zealand society since the colonial period. Richard Hill's (1986a & 1986b) historical coverage of policing between 1767 and 1869 discusses and describes the activities of several gangs that were in existence during that time. These gangs, predominantly Pakeha/European based, were scattered throughout the country causing havoc and mayhem with their murders, robberies and rampages of destruction. In Hill's coverage we read about gangs, such as the Parkhouse Boys, a group of youthful offenders sent here from Britain in October 1842. On their arrival in New Zealand, these youth were known to cause the small Auckland police no end of trouble. Some of these boys absconded from their supervised work programmes, to live with local Maori, or in the back streets around Auckland. Many of these boys were later said to be teaching the local Maori youth how to steal. Soon pleas from the police, unable to cope with "the ingenious and well devised modes of plunder" (Hill, 1986a, p.361), called for the importation of convicts from Britain to stop. And in November 1843 the shipments of Parkhouse Boys ceased.

In Hill's work, we can read about the life and times of the Garrett gang, led by bank robber Henry Garrett around the 1860s. The Otago goldfields proved a profitable territory for the "bushranging gang" (Hill, 1986b, p.563), until the police caught up with them in 1862. Garrett was finally arrested in Sydney before being brought to the Dunedin court, where he was sent to prison for eight years. Hill also reported on the Gardiner gang, and the capture of its leader, Charlie Gilbert, in 1863, (ibid, p. 593). Likewise, the escapades and crimes of the notorious Burgess-Kelly gang are outlined. The Burgess-Kelly gang was well known for its involvement in the Maungatapu murders, where five people were killed along the Maungatapu track in the West Canterbury province in 1866 (ibid, p. 679). As the Canterbury region had become "a 'land of refuge' for 'all criminals and disorderly paersons'" (ibid, p.681), these gangs and their accomplices kept the colonial police busy.

Although these gangs were written about, little acknowledgement is given to their existence or activities in recent literature on gangs (Tam, 1999). Notably, it was the arrival of youth

gangs in the 1950s that took the nation by surprise, and caused even more concern than the gangs of the old-times did.

The Rapid Rise of Gangs: 1950s-1980s

During the 1950s and 1960s New Zealand went through a period of fast growth and rapid social change. The country had begun to emerge from the tough times of the Great Depression [1920s-1930s] and had survived the political upheavals of World War II. And, as in America, New Zealand's post-war economy flourished and it was a time of prosperity. During this time, the population became more suburbanised, people from the Pacific Islands were brought into the country to provide labour, Maori were encouraged to shift to the cities, and new social movements emerged. Essentially, this was a time of enthusiasm and contentment for many adults. New houses, with all the modern conveniences, well-manicured front lawns and picket fences, took priority until the so-called youth problem took hold.

The teenagers in the suburbs, comparatively well off when compared to the teenage-years of their parents, often had money to spend and little parental supervision. As recreational and sporting provisions in many suburbs were inadequate, teenagers were forced to make or find their own forms of entertainment. Following similar social developments in America, conflict and disagreement between New Zealand's older generation and society's discontented youth occurred. The rise of the rebellious teenager and their activities soon came under close scrutiny. And thus, juvenile delinquency and the youth problem became major social issues of the time (Inciardi, 1990, pp.6-17; Thorns & Sedgwick, 1997, p.191; Yska, 1993, pp.37-57; Yska 1990, pp.49-58).

In the 1950s youth gangs had become well known in New Zealand. The Teddy Boys, the Bodgies and Widgies, and other similar groups of youth who frequented local milk bars, billiard rooms, pool halls, and some urban street corners, have been mentioned frequently in the literature (Anastasiou, 1971, p.25; Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.1; Newbold, 1992, p.100; Yska, 1993, p.9). It is reported that these groups caused the wider population considerable concern, particularly in relation to acts of lawlessness and hooliganism (Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.1; Newbold, 1992, p.100). Youth offending drew the attention of the media, which tended to highlight the negative aspects of such groups and their "relative disregard to the norms and values of their society" (Marsh, 1982, p.4). These early groups were largely

informal structures with loosely coordinated and fluid membership patterns (Anastasiou, 1971, p.25). And in this sense, they were a huge contrast when compared to the more organised and highly structured drug dealing crime networks that are associated with today's gangs. It was reported, however, that a group known as The Saints, a tightly organised at that time for the purpose of crime, had committed burglaries to the tune of 30,000 pounds (Howman, 1971, p.21). In the 1950s this was a considerable sum.

The 1950 youth gangs were a part of a wider youth problem that had emerged in two distinct phases. The first centred on the issue of "juvenile immorality" (Shuker, Openshaw & Soler, 1990, p.20) and highlighted sexual exploration by teenagers as being both a disturbing and an immoral trend. Shuker et al (1990, p.21), in their review of the media role in generating a moral panic around the youth problem during the 1950s and 1960s, indicate that the governmental stand on these issues "linked the theme of juvenile delinquency with that of indecent literature."

Controversy arose around comics – such as Frederic Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent* (1953), stage shows like *Follies Bergene*, which featured nude women, and films, like, *The Wild One*, which idealised the juvenile motorcycle gangs (see Shuker et al, 1990, pp.27, 89-90). These presentations were portrayed as being instrumental in promoting immoral and indecent acts among children and adolescents. Media coverage of isolated events, such as the court appearances of "fifty to sixty adolescents...[who faced] moral delinquency charges" (Shuker et al, 1990, p.21) in a Lower Hutt Magistrates' Court 1954, and the Parker-Hulme murder trial from August to September, 1954, worked to reinforce the government's and the public's sentiment (ibid, p.24, pp.83-94). Shuker et al also indicate that in 1954 the weekly newspaper, the *NZ Truth* linked groups of adolescent youth like those involved in the Lower Hutt incident with the concept of "teenage gangs" (cited in Shuker et al, 1990, p.23) and labels like 'Milkbar Cowboys' were then generated in New Zealand.

Redmer Yska (1993, pp.144-149) explored teenage activity in the 1950s, and discusses a group of youths that frequented Curries' Milkbar in Queen Street, Auckland in 1955. This group, calling themselves the 'Curries' Cowboys', had secured a number of motorcycles – mainly BSAs and a few Triumphs – which attracted a lot of interest from the public. Inspired by scenes presented in *The Wild One*, the dress code included long greatcoats, or leather bomber-style jackets that had skulls and crossbones emblazoned to the backs. Hobnail boots

also played a part in the dress standard, which contrasted sharply with the brightly dressed 'bodgies' of that era. In time the Curries' Cowboys became involved in fistfights with the groups of Bodgies and Teddy Boys in the area and they soon came to the attention of the police and the courts (Yska, 1993, pp.144-149).

As the police and the courts became more involved in the lives of these and other such youth, the emphasis on the theme of juvenile immorality was gradually replaced with rhetoric of a juvenile "crime wave" (Shuker et al, 1990, p24). The debate surrounding immoral literature increased, public concern focused on censorship issues and this led to calls for a tightening of the censorship laws. In general, however, the perceived threats to society that the youth of the time presented, and these early 'gangs', were passing occurrences. And although the motorcycle gangs remained, the issues surrounding them tended to fade away as the youth concerned aged and settled into the mainstream of society.

During the early 1960s some new comers to the New Zealand scene bolstered the motorcycle clubs' image and activities. The Hell's Angels, originating in California in 1948, established a chapter in Auckland; its charter dated January 7, 1961 (Lavigne, 1987, pp.61-62). The rise in New Zealand versions of this gang soon followed with groups such as the Mothers, the Outcasts (Marsh, 1982, p.5), the Head Hunters and Highway 61 (Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.2) emerging. One of the best established of these early gangs, Highway 61 was formed in Auckland in 1968. A group of youths, mainly Pacific Islanders, who had been walking the streets since 1966 wearing hand-painted insignia on their backs, started to accumulate British motorcycles. The club name was inspired by the words of Bob Dylan's song *Highway 61 Revisited*, from the album of the same name released in 1967 (Williams, 1981, pp.38-44).

Well, God said to Abraham, "Kill me a son."

Abe said, "Man, you must be puttin' me on."

God said, "No!"

Abe said, "What?"

God said, "You can do what you want to, but next time you see me you'd better run."

"Well," said Abe. "Where do you want this killing done?"

God said, "Out on Highway 61."

(Bob Dylan - Highway 61 Revisited)

In 1970, the club added 'MC', for Motorcycle Club to their name. Membership in Highway 61 MC has always been multi-racial, unlike the American Hell's Angels, which internationally has been known to support white supremacist ideals (Lavigne, 1987, p.66). In New Zealand, however, the Hell's Angels openly reject racism and at one time had a President known as 'Spade' who was of Fijian ancestry. In addition the New Zealand chapter of the Hell's Angels has had strong connections with the local Headhunters (*NZ Herald*, 26 July 1999). Highway 61, however, has adopted much of the Hell's Angels' symbolism, particularly in terms of dress code and patch design. Highway 61's members' pledge "HFFH" ["Highway Forever, Forever Highway"] (Williams, 1981, p. 38) is similar to that of the Hell's Angels' - "AFFA" ["Angels Forever, Forever Angels"] (Lavigne, 1987, p.79). This demonstrates the degree to which the American motorcycle gang influenced the development of some motorcycle gangs in New Zealand.

Initially, motorcycle club members with an avid interest in the big bikes, gathered together in the urban centres, in small cliques for friendship and shared interests. They would ride down New Zealand's roads and streets on their rumbling Triumphs, Nortons and BSAs. The bikers, dressed in leathers and adorned with identifying insignia or 'patches' displaying their club's name, soon evoked the general public's scorn and contempt (Howman, 1971, p.8). When stories of violence, disorderly behaviour, dishonesty and 'objectionable' sexual activity were associated with the motorcycle gangs, public indignation increased.

During the 1960s motorcycle club members were well aware of the public's attitude toward them. In March 1967 members of a Wellington-based motorcycle gang known as the 25 Club complained to the media that the public would not let them "ride the straight and narrow life" (Farquhar, 1967, p.12). They claimed that they were "victimised" (ibid) by the police who, gang members report, had threatened to break up the club. In August 1968, however, five out of seven men sentenced for rape or attempted rape were members of the 25 Club. Such activities reinforced the belief that motorcycle clubs were centres for "drinking parties and sex" (*NZ Truth*, 20 August 1968). Again while motorcycle gangs commanded the scrutiny of the police and public concern was expressed, the development of these bkie gangs, by all accounts, was considered to be a "passing phenomenon" (Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.2) as the earlier youth groups or gangs had been.

During the late 1960s and the 1970s the motorcycle gangs were somewhat overshadowed by the high profile given to the ethnic gangs in the media. The term 'ethnic gang', adopted by the Committee on Gangs in 1981, is often associated with gangs that are made up, predominantly, of ethnic minorities or to refer to gangs which are not motorcycle gangs. In New Zealand the term is generally used to refer to gangs that have a high concentration of Maori and Pacific Islanders in their membership. Gangs such as the Mongrel Mob, Black Power, the Stormtroopers, the Headhunters and the King Cobras fall into this category (Committee on Gangs, 1981, p.5). The King Cobras have boasted of a "council of chiefs" (Payne, 1991, p.104), which is made up of Samoan, Niuean, Tongan, Rarotongan and Maori dignities.

While some ethnic gangs can present an overview of their origins and history, others have found these details to have become blurred overtime. The origin of the Mongrel Mob, one of the largest ethnic gangs (Gardiner, 1996, p.7) is a matter for debate. Some, including Mob members themselves (Marsh, 1982, p.76), believe the gang developed in Hastings in 1956 when a presiding judge sentenced two men, the Stafford brothers, to terms of imprisonment. This judge is reported to have labelled these men and their associates "a pack of mongrels" (cited in Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.2; Marsh, 1982, p.76; & referred to in Butterworth, 1979, p.3; McGill, 1995, pp.86-87; Newbold, 1992, p.101; Payne, 1991, p.37). Others put forward less dramatic explanations for the gang's development.

Some Mob members suggest that the Mongrel Mob evolved naturally over time from a number of small school groups or cliques of youth that had existed for some time (Marsh, 1982, p.76). Graham Butterworth, a contributor to the *NZ Police Association Newsletter* (1979, p.1), suggested that Sir Apirana Ngata [1874-1950], a prominent Maori leader, inspired the growth of the gang when he expressed his concern for Maori youth in relation to the gradual loss of Maori land and their language. " 'They would be mongrels', [he said,] 'Wandering the land shamefaced before Pakeha' " (cited in Butterworth, 1979, p.3). Butterworth also implies that the Maori and Pacific Islanders who had formed the early gangs had a lack of pride and low self-esteem. He suggests that the Maori gangs resembled "the Warrior groups of the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s" (ibid, p.2) which, he believed, had the potential to become the "nucleus for urban guerillas" (ibid). What becomes clear, and is well documented, is that by 1969 the Mongrel Mob existed in small pockets outside the Hastings area. Research and media reports show that the Mongrel Mob were established in the Wellington / Porirua region, in Mt Eden and Whangaehu in that year (Howman, 1971,

Appendix; *NZ Truth*, 22 June 1969). In contrast, Black Power, the other well-known ethnic gang, has a less debated history.

Black Power emerged through the efforts of Rei Harris and several of his associates. Initially they formed a group, known as the Black Bulls, in Wellington in 1970 (Marsh, 1982, p.76; Payne, 1991, p.120; Wane, 1991, p.16). Grounded in a “struggle for supremacy of the streets” (Wane, 1991, p.16) and inspired by the civil rights movement, particularly Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, the gang was later renamed Black Power. Their evolution provided Maori youth with an alternative to the bikie gangs and other groups, such as the V8s, the Chevy Boys, Satan’s Slaves and the 25 Club, which were predominantly Pakeha in orientation at that time (Payne, 1991, p.120; Wane, 1991, p.16).

Rei Harris held a charismatic quality which, combined with effective leadership skills and an entrepreneurial ability, facilitated the growth of the gang (Payne, 1991, p.124). Within a short time, Black Power had established chapters in Auckland and the Bay of Plenty. In Auckland, in 1976, a group known as The Sindis was formed by the Wharewaka brothers who, like many other Maori youth, felt alienated and frustrated in their urban environment (O’Reilly, 1986, p.134). This group, which provided an avenue for companionship and support, merged into the Auckland chapter of Black Power when Abe Wharewaka and his brothers joined the gang in 1977 (Walker, 1990a, p.261). In time, Abe Wharewaka became a successful entrepreneur who promoted the growth of the Auckland chapter by building a prosperous “labour hire pool” (ibid) that worked under contract for various construction companies. By the 1980s, Black Power had built up a strong, national leadership structure, which, guided by Buddhist Bill Maung, developed a staunch political awareness (Payne, 1991, p.123; Wane, 1991, p.16).

The general rise and growth of the ethnic gangs, such as Black Power and the Mongrel Mob, has been attributed to a number of social factors that are often related to the process of urbanisation and the breakdown of the traditional extended family. High unemployment and low educational attainment amongst the lower socio-economic classes, which incorporate many Maori and Pacific Islanders, have also been cited as general contributing factors towards strong gang memberships (Committee on Gangs, 1981, pp. 6-9; Sullivan, 1977, p.73). Maori academic Ranginui Walker maintains that:

Gangs exist as satisfying social groups for their members. Through gang membership the individual finds satisfaction for his personal and social needs.
(1971, p.43)

With regards to Maori and Pacific Islander membership in gangs, Walker suggests that the personal and social needs of these groupings were largely overlooked or ignored by our society during the process of urbanisation that occurred from 1950s, through to the 1970s (Walker, 1971, p.43; 1979, pp. 16-23; 1996, p.11). At this time, attempts to assimilate ethnic migrants under a policy of integration were initiated, which left the children of many first generation Maori and Pacific Island migrants to be “reared in a cultural vacuum” (Walker, 1971, p.43), without the traditional cultural supports and cultural practices.

These children found peer group affiliations on the streets a strong support while their parents struggled to secure viable work, establish a home and adapt to the mechanisms of the Pakeha orientated urban milieu. Within the school system, “a monocultural, middle-class institution of west-European origin,” Walker argues, many of these Maori and Pacific Island children failed, only to join the ever-increasing “number of brown proletariat, [or] the new outcasts of urban society” (Walker, 1979, p.22). Feeling alienated in their urban context, the children relied on their peer group networks for support and a sense of belonging. Many of their personal and social needs were met within their peer group networks. As these groups strengthened, through the individual youth’s voluntary association, they became the genesis or roots of today’s well-known gangs. And, in time, as with Black Power, these original fluid networks became more organised.

By the late 1970s, both the motorcycle and ethnic gangs of the time had become generally more structured and organised than their previous counterparts. Clearly, some were now operating under cohesive, internally organised, hierarchal systems of leadership (Committee on Gangs, 1981, pp.5-7; Newbold, 1989, p.269) which often consisted of a President and Vice-President, and a Sergeant-at-Arms who monitored the gang’s activity in relation to security and surveillance procedures. Many gangs had also incorporated a treasurer and a secretary (Jeffery, 1981, p.21; Marsh, 1982, pp. 50-54). These positions, holding status within the gangs, were established at a local chapter level and, in some cases, operated nationally as well. Some gangs, particularly Black Power, began to hold national conventions where

members from their various community chapters met to elect their National President (Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.2; O'Reilly, 1981, pp.7-20).

By 1975 about 40 different gangs had formed (Newbold, 1992, p.101). During the late 1970s and through the 1980s gangs like Black Power, the Mongrel Mob and to a lesser degree Highway 61 and the Hell's Angels, maintained a relatively high profile in New Zealand. It has been suggested that "most people in the community knew someone with gang involvement or at least someone else who did" (Gardiner, 1996, p.7). In 1981, the *Report of the Committee on Gangs* claimed that there were "at least 20 bikie gangs... [and] at least 57 ethnic gangs" (Committee on Gangs, 1981, pp.6-7) in New Zealand with an estimated sum of 2,300 gang members. This took into account the members of a small number of European, skinhead or white orientated groups that existed as well. As the gang memberships stabilised, the gangs sought the establishment of clubhouses.

Initially, the most obvious of the clubhouses or 'crashpads' to become evident were connected to the motorcycle gangs, and when the ethnic gangs evolved the houses that were frequented often by gang members also became known as gang 'pads'. Rented residential properties were often converted to suit the needs of the club members and modifications generally incorporated a well-stocked bar, an extended lounge area with a high quality sound system installed, and a pool table area. Bathroom and kitchen facilities were retained and the garage areas were often extended to include workshops where members, particularly the bikers, could work on their machines. Some gang members generally lived on the premises, not only for accommodation purposes, but also as a means of security (Jeffery, 1981, p.12). Later, as will be shown, some of the gangs were able to generate sustainable incomes, which enabled the more stable of them to purchase private property for club purposes.

Gang headquarters were generally, and still are, surrounded with large fortified fences. These were strewn with barbed wire, flood lights and, in more recent years, surveillance cameras. Gang members saw fortification as a means of protection from outsiders, as a means to secure gang property and as a barrier to attack or retaliation from other gangs (Committee on Gangs, 1981, p.7). Others, namely outsiders, believed the fortified fences merely provoked attacks from rival gangs (Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Violence, 1987, p.92). More recently, as will be discussed later, the police have argued that the fortified fences merely facilitate the

concealment of criminal activity, including the sale of cannabis and other drugs (*Press*, 10 Oct. 1998), which promoted considerable debate.

Gang activity has always been an emotive topic and 1979, dubbed “the year of the gangs” (Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.3), has been cited as a period of moral panic that was intensified by comments of the “media, politicians and other ‘right-thinking people’ ” (ibid, p.3). From time to time, the gangs became involved in sporadic confrontations and territorial skirmishes. Prior to 1979 these occurrences were merely observed by the police, who intervened only when necessary to inquire into homicides and robberies, or when specific complaints were made (Walker, 1996, p.148). As long as the gangs battled among themselves no one paid them too much attention. In 1979, however, when the Auckland-based Stormtroopers, unable to find their rivals in a feud, turned their aggression on the police in a confrontation at the Moerewa Hotel the public attitude changed. A highly publicised riot followed in which a policeman was injured and the public “call[ed] for a ‘crackdown’ on gang violence” (Walker, 1996, p. 148) from the public. The media, having reported concern from the police, politicians and the judiciary, presented a dramatic and emotive coverage of gang activity around this time that tended to concentrate on the more negative aspects of gang life. And, in many respects, this intensive coverage negated the existence of any positive considerations (see Kelsey & Young, 1982 for further detail).

Prompted by the media, and within the context of racism (Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Violence, 1987, p.87), public indignation against the gangs increased. The majority saw the gangs as a law and order issue that soon developed into a social problem (Anon, 1981, p.105; Kelsey & Young, 1982, p.3). Within a short time the staunch gang member, being predominantly Maori within the ethnic gangs, became “the nightmare incarnation of the Pakeha New Zealander’s worst fears” (Walker, 1990a, p.222). This was despite the fact that there were only an estimated 2,000 Maori gang members throughout New Zealand while some 400,000 Maori were law-abiding citizens shamed by the media portrayal of gang activity (Walker, 1990b, p.43). With the Maori gangs being seen as a heinous problem causing unprecedented fear amongst the general population, prominent Maori leaders were placed under immense pressure to condemn the violence used and to propose policies that would clear up the gang problem (Butterworth, 1979, p.4; Walker, 1990b, p.40).

Alongside the issue of violence, the gangs, and again, mainly the Maori gangs, came under the media spotlight when it was realised that they were receiving Government funding through the Labour Department work schemes (Walker, 1990a, p. 262; Walker, 1990b, p.43). As with Black Power, other gangs, including Highway 61 and the Mongrel Mob, had become more structured and established work co-operatives. In doing so, the gangs demonstrated to the general public that they had the ability to co-ordinate and maintain their various activities (Committee on Gangs, 1981, pp.3-7; Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Violence, 1987, p.87; Walker, 1990a, pp. 222 & 261). Many gangs were able to accumulate cash reserves through membership fees and club bar facilities. Some gangs; Black Power, the Mongrel Mob, Highway 61 also secured reasonable cash flows through the Government's employment schemes. In Christchurch during 1979, for example, Mr Lou Hau, a detached youth worker, worked effectively to secure work for many of the tradesmen in Highway 61 and he assisted Mongrel Mob and Black Power members to establish work co-operatives in the area. Government departments co-operated with Mr Hau and other detached youth workers in an attempt to deal with the gang problems of the late 1970s (Arthur, 1979, p.2). Reports indicate that later, in the 1980s that gangs were securing large amounts of funding through the Government's employment and Maori Access schemes.

During 1982, the Auckland chapter of Black Power formed Tatau Te Iwi Trust under the guidance of Abe Wharewaka. The trust bought some land in an East Tamaki industrial area and, with the aid of voluntary labour from gang members and associates, built a new headquarters that functioned as a nightclub complete with bar, cubicles and pool tables (Walker, 1990a, p.262). In 1983, the trust refinanced monies borrowed during the building process with a Housing Corporation mortgage. The media, having sourced this information made a "sensational story" (ibid) out of Black Power's successes. By 1986, the police were investigating a number of gangs and their work schemes with regard to funding improprieties. Media reports followed, which suggested that public funds, ranging from "\$90,000 up to \$900,000" (Walker, 1996, p.150) were being fed into gang reserves. Black Power's Wharewaka had imported 18 Harley Davidson motorcycles from Los Angeles for club members and it is reported that he also secured a stretch limousine. These purchases were perceived by some as symbols of their success, but the general public was angered and some were incensed thinking that their taxes were being used to supplement gang activity (Walker, 1990a, p.262).

Subsequently, a police submission to the Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Violence, 1987, said that:

Gangs have become more co-ordinated and sophisticated, a trend which disturbs the Police. Disorder offences, which typified their past behaviour, are still to be found but now gangs are more heavily involved in serious crime, activities which are more difficult to detect. The tentacles of criminal offending have spread to include both New Zealand and the international arena.

(Cited in the *Report of the Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Violence*, 1987, p.89)

Although such submissions indicated a shift in the way the gangs, in general, had been operating, the Committee of Inquiry was not overly concerned with the 'gang problem' as such. By all accounts, gang membership had levelled out and reached a plateau as estimates of membership had not risen to any significant degree over the previous five years and remained constant at around 2,200 during that time. However, the Committee of Inquiry restated concerns that previously had been highlighted in the *Report of the Committee on Gangs* (1981) that the media representation of gang activity had "tended to reinforce and 'glamorise' the gangs' tough image" (Ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Violence, 1987, p.92). The Committee of Inquiry also found that some media reports were distorted and taken out of context. As an attempt to keep the gang problem in perspective the Committee recommended that the police employ "electronic surveillance to combat organised crime by gangs" (ibid, p. 91), and that the media needed to review their policy regarding the coverage of gang activity.

Gang Membership: The Estimates.

Although information on gang activity in the media over the next few years was less concentrated, the public perception remained fixed: that gangs were primarily breeding grounds for violence and crime (Walker, 1996, p.149). And gang membership increased dramatically during the late 1980s in spite of the reduced coverage. Police estimates indicated that there were 44 gangs in 1986, comprising around 2200 gang members and associates. By 1988 it was estimated that there were 4453 gang members and associates connected to 48 gangs (Gardiner, 1996, p.7), and by 1990 police estimates suggested that there were around 6550 gang members and associates combined throughout New Zealand (Meek, 1992, p.258). By 1996 the figure reported had risen to 10,000 gang members and associates connected to a total of 53 identified gangs (Gardiner, 1996, p.7). More recently, during 1998, the police

estimates of gang membership had altered to 5000 members and 15,000 associates (*Press*, 18 Sept. 1998).

While these figures may seem fairly daunting at first, there remains some ambiguity over how these membership numbers have been recorded. And queries have arisen as to “whether the same definition of gang membership [has] been used over time” (Meek, 1992, p.258). The term ‘gang associate’ is sometimes misleading as a gang’s membership quota varies according to who is doing the categorising. Clearly, gang members themselves may not consider some of those defined as gang members or associates by the police as such. And police on the beat admit to having difficulty categorising gang associates, as the following discussion indicates:

Interviewer: With reference to this media report on the increase of gang members and associates, where do women fit?

Det. Neale: It would only refer to male stats. It wouldn’t have any stats there on the female. There may be some [female] associates in that but I think that’s all.

Interviewer: So we could be talking about 10,000 women?

Det. Neale: Um, yeah, it’s quite possible, although it says 10,000 members and associates. Um, we term anyone who is not actually a patch-wearing member or a prospect as an associate. An associate could be a lady, a person, or a child.

Interviewer: A bit ambiguous really. Do you keep records according to gender?

Det. Neale: Yeah, we can say which gender they are, but the only problem is that we don’t know, half the time, who is with who and it is only when something happens, half the time, that we find out.

(Neale, 1998)

From this discussion, it could be concluded that there are only vague guidelines to aid the police in their categorisation of gang associates. Clearly, anyone, relatives, wives, girlfriends, and neighbours, be they friend or foe, or partners in criminal dealings could be classified as a gang associate. And according membership status by means of identifying the ‘patch-wearing members’ becomes particularly problematic when many of the gangs of the 1990s, for example the Fourth Reich and the Homies, do not wear patches. Similarly, the shift in the way some gangs have been operating, on a more covert basis, makes the differentiation even more complex and possibly unattainable except by means of self identification (Meek, 1992, p.266;

Taalalo, 1995, p.13). By all accounts, the data collected on gangs in New Zealand remains largely fragmented and superficial (Marsh, 1982, p.2; Walker, 1971, p.43). With little in the way of formal research most of the data collected on gangs have been obtained through secondary sources, and mainly through the police (Meek, 1992, p.257). Although some of the gangs, like Black Power and the Mongrel Mob seem to have become permanent subcultures within our society many gangs still emerge as transitory groupings, which soon disintegrate as members mature with age. These factors make the categorisation of gang members and their associates an almost impossible task, which leaves much uncertainty surrounding police estimates being reported through the media.

Upon reflection and considering the difficulties in determining gang membership, there is little or no evidence to support the reports of the dramatic increases in gang membership previously referred to. Police estimates of gang membership have stabilised during the 1990s at around 5,500 and the number of associates bandied about in the media constitutes mere speculation (Newbold, 1997, p.90). It could be surmised that the numbers of gang members and associates incarcerated in prison would increase if the reports that "gangs were responsible for 80 per cent of all serious crimes committed in New Zealand" (*Press*, 18 Sept. 1998) were accurate. But, on the contrary, according to the data outlined in the latest *Census of Prison Inmates 1997*, the reverse has occurred (Lash, 1998, pp. 90-91). During 1987 the total sum of male prison inmates who were recorded as patched gang members stood at 15.4 per cent of the prison population. Furthermore, this figure has dropped in every census of prison inmates recorded between 1987 until 1997, when gang members constituted only 7.1 per cent of the total prison population. Again, police reports regarding serious crime and prison figures do not correlate well.

In many respects, gangs and gang activity have been politicised and gang developments and activity have been used as justification for police funding and for political purposes (Newbold, 1997, p.90). Gangs have been, and are often used to argue for or justify, new legislation, and for increases in the number of police to combat the threat of organised crime (see for example, Doone, 1997, p.4) and other criminal enterprise. Understanding the politicisation of gangs helps to explain some of the disparity in media claims about gang membership numbers and gang activity. This needs to be considered when exploring gang activity through the 1990s.

Gang Activity in the 1990s and Towards 2000.

In terms of gang developments, three significant themes emerged during the 1990s. On one level the gangs with a predominantly Pakeha, or European, membership made their mark on society with a rise in the number of white-supremacist type gangs in New Zealand. Media recognition of these groups and reports of racist attacks on ethnic minorities, particularly Asian immigrants, helped to highlight an underlying racial intolerance and bigotry in parts of our society. Alongside this, there was the emergence of new ethnic gangs, street gangs that have been modelled on the American street gangs, and in particular the Los Angeles ethnic gangs that have been glorified in rap music and in video clips. And the police have recognised the existence of Asian gangs, and Triad networks operating in New Zealand. In addition there has been a marked shift in the way that the police, the politicians and the media have portrayed gang activity and developments. During the 1990s special emphasis has been placed on the role gangs have played or play in organised crime, particularly in relation to drug dealing, the supply of illegal weapons, extortion and money laundering, and organised robbery and burglary (Newbold, 1997, pp.81-87). For ease these themes will be discussed in the relevant categories, although in reality such divisions do not exist, and each aspect impacts on and interrelates with the others to a degree.

The Staunch White Orientated Gangs and the Rise of Overt Neo-Nazi Networks.

Gangs with white supremacist ideals, for example; the Road Knights, the Epitaph Riders, White Power and New Zealand Skinheads, existed prior to the 1990s. Written documentation of skinhead history in Christchurch states that there is evidence of a small skinhead crew that operated in the early 1970s. But, generally they were not labelled as such until later when skinheads were recognised as having emerged out of the punk and bootboy movement in 1977. And by 1979/80 a clear distinction between punks or bootboys and the skinheads had become noticeable; the punks more likely to have emerged from the middle classes while the skinheads come from the lower socio-economic strata (Addison, 1995, pp.82-84). In an article, titled *Boots and Bristle: Skinhead Music and Politics as Resistance*, Paul Spoonley (1987, pp.105-106) draws attention to members of White Power who, charged in relation to throwing a molotov cocktail into a Wellington building in 1979, "were 'dedicated' to getting rid of 'coloured people' in New Zealand." During the mid 1980s, another group of skinheads in Palmerston North was known to have intimidated and harassed people in the Asian and Pacific Island communities. This group, of mainly unemployed youth, also had displayed a

swastika flag during a demonstration down the city's main street. By all accounts the group members were well acquainted with the Nazi writings of the 1930s and National Front publications of the 1970s (ibid, p.105). Having aligned themselves with the political ideology of Colin King-Ansell's Auckland-based National Socialist White People's Party this group openly challenged public agencies, such as the Unemployed Rights Centre, which they perceived as being "too 'Maori'" (ibid, p.105) in orientation.

During the early 1980s unemployment in New Zealand was rising and youth from the lower socio-economic areas were known to leave school with little to look forward to in terms of employment prospects. The skinhead movement gave pakeha/white youth within this context, it is stated:

...something to follow, something to believe in, and people to blame for their predicament. It was more than just a fashion statement, it was something that gave meaning and substance to their lives where otherwise there was none.

(Addison, 1995, p.84)

By the mid 1980s, isolated incidents of violence involving groups that adhere in varying degrees to white supremacist philosophy have been reported in the media. But they have never attracted the same level of media attention that the ethnic gangs had received during their developing years (Spoonley, 1987, p.105; Walker, 1996, p.151). Instead, both the police and the media tended to water down their descriptions so that the violent acts, sometimes racially motivated, carried out by the predominantly European/Pakeha based gangs, were seen as random occurrences of an apolitical nature (Spoonley, 1987, p.105). This minimal media coverage may have been initiated to avoid giving these gangs a status or boosting their profile, or it may have been that the white orientated gangs were not involved activities that attracted a strong media following such as such as gang rapes, or major riots. Nevertheless, the public has remained relatively uninformed about the activity. That is, until 1991, when simmering tensions between two Christchurch gangs struggling over territory and drug distribution avenues, erupted. Now whenever these groups raise their heads the media are quick to respond and present detailed coverage of the events that occur.

A number of skinhead crews were running prior to 1991. The Christchurch Skinhead Club operated from 1982 to 1987, the United Front Nazi Party, also locally known as the 'United Skinheads', and crew called the 'Firm' also existed. Confrontation between these crews

around 1985 to 1986 led to a number of stabbings and violent altercations, which reinforced negative images of skinhead crews at that time. By 1990 both the Firm and the Christchurch Skinhead Club had disbanded while the United Skinheads, although in decline, maintained a reputation around New Zealand that they presented with Nazi and psychotic tendencies. It is also noted that it was a former Road Knights' vice-president from Timaru who started the United Skinheads. It is reported that he encountered resistance within the skinhead movement to his idea of establishing a white power group. This was because of the "traditional biker/skinhead hostility" (Addison, 1995, p.86) and because skinheads were into the punk scene and Oi music, and had attracted some Maori members.

By 1991, however, white power supporters with racist beliefs had gathered in number and strength. And Christchurch, at the time, became known as a city "torn apart by two warring gangs – White Power and Highway 61" (Andrae, 1991, p.1628), with fire bombings and shootings placing the general public at risk. As the Christchurch chapter of Highway 61 had a membership that was, and still is, mostly Maori, some say the origins of the conflict were more racial than commercial, or political (ibid, p.1628). In 1991 the White Power network in Christchurch centred around the Harris brothers; Russell, Paul, Ricki and Darryl, informally known as the Harris Gang. This gang soon expanded and recruited new members within the local skinhead population (Harris, 1999). The police, although initially reluctant to discuss the issue, held a growing concern as the Harris Gang and their associates had established a long list of convictions for theft, burglary and unlawful car taking (Andrae, 1991, p.1628), and extreme violent tactics. It is reported that they also had carried out unprovoked assaults on Maori who had no gang affiliations.

Media reports indicate that during 1990 one of the Harris Gang associates was convicted of manslaughter after a stabbing incident, and that a Maori man with no known gang affiliations was viciously assaulted as he walked past the gang's houses. He had both his kneecaps smashed and his arm broken (ibid, p.1628; *Press*, 11 July 1998). In 1991, after the Harris Gang members shot and injured two Highway 61 members in a busy Christchurch street, the police launched Operation Persil, using secret video surveillance to monitor activity at the Harris Gang's houses, as an attempt to curb the gang's growing influence in the city.

Police raids on the houses uncovered loaded shotguns, and molotov cocktails, supplies of cannabis and Temgesic, a prescription painkiller. Subsequently, some 63 charges were

brought before the Christchurch Courts against several of the Harris Gang. The three Harris brothers and eight others were eventually convicted and imprisoned for their involvement in the shootings (Andrae, 1991, p.1628). Later in 1991, Neil Swain, described as a “ruthless and meticulous criminal” (Clarke, 1992, p.1) with the nickname of Orange Peel was convicted of the following charges:

...the bombing of the Sydenham police station, the burglary and attempted arson of a Christchurch police officer's home, the gun point abduction of a woman who testified against the Harris gang, and her friend, and the burning down of their house in Wigram, and with having a loaded sawn-off shot gun outside the Ferryroad Tavern.

(Clarke, 1992, p.1)

Considerable evidence existed that indicated that Swain was connected to the Harris Gang. It was concluded that he had been contracted by the gang to carry out the bombing and the arson attacks. After this, media reports suggest that Russell Harris senior, father of the Harris brothers, had expressed his concerns about the use of the Harris name and related problems that had arisen for the family. The Harris brothers and the gang later, around 1993, joined up with the Road Knights, which originated in Timaru some years earlier in 1979 (*Press*, 11 July 1998). Darryl Harris was said to have become the president of the Christchurch chapter in 1993 and as time has gone by, this chapter became known as Christchurch's most notorious gang.

The Timaru Road Knights previously had built a reputation for holding white supremacist beliefs and ideals, and have been known for the use of standover tactics and violence against other gangs and minority groups. The Timaru chapter of the Road Knights is said to have originally absorbed Timaru's other racist networks, particularly groups known as the KKK and White Power (Ansley, 1992, p.19). The Timaru Road Knights remain openly racist. Media reports during 1992-97 indicate that their clubhouse was/is frequently adorned with a Nazi flag and other white power material. The Christchurch chapter, having been bolstered in numbers and strength by the Harris Gang and their associates, soon became a strong link between the other skinhead/white power factions in the South Island. Within the Road Knights, the Harris brothers yield considerable power and remain shielded, to a degree, from the law by the gang's less senior members, prospects, and associates (Andrae, 1991, p.1628; Ansley, 1992, p.19; Ansley, 1997, p.28). In the meantime, two other occurrences had supported the growth of skinhead and white power networks in New Zealand.

The first event was the publication of Bill Payne's book, *Staunch: Inside New Zealand Gangs*, in 1991. Payne presented a brief profile covering aspects of skinheadism and white power culture that inspired a small number of new comers. The second occurrence that revitalised skinhead and white power activity in Christchurch and on a national level was the release of the film *Romper Stomper* in 1992. This Australian made film portrayed two skinheads whose lives in a gang centered around drugs and alcohol, sexual encounters with women, vandalism, and violence against Asians. And while the film illustrates how messed up and meaningless the skinhead or white power world can be it has become a treasured icon within these circles. Young skinheads were inspired to shave their heads and join the troops (Addison, 1995, p.87). Some of these youngsters were attracted to the Road Knights.

The Christchurch Road Knights have been connected with the now defunct Bandenkrieg, which translates to 'Gang of War' (Gardiner, 1996, p.7), who were believed to be the Road Knights' junior level of the gang until 1997 (*Press*, 15 May 1999). These juniors were not averse to using violence or committing assaults. Alongside these youth a lower group of pakeha youth or 'wannabes' existed, who, the police believe, support the gang's white power ideals (O'Hanlon, 1998a, p.3). Police believe that 'gang business' within the Road Knights is centred on drug dealing. In June 1996 Auckland's Hell's Angels are said to have negotiated with the Road Knights to distribute drugs throughout the South Island in a franchise type arrangement (*Evening Post*, 24 Dec. 1996). The Road Knights have additional chapters established in Dunedin and Invercargill that facilitate their progressive business dealings, and in the Nelson region they operate links through the insidiously named Fourth Reich, which formed in Paparua Prison in 1992 (Ansley, 1997, p.28). The Fourth Reich members are said to travel frequently, and their activity is spread around Christchurch, Nelson, the West Coast, Timaru and Dunedin (Harris, 1999).

The Fourth Reich adhere to a neo-Nazi, white power ideology and have a membership ranging between 15-22 men, some of whom, ironically enough, have Maori ancestry. This gang is fiercely loyal and recruits members from within the prison culture. Their loyalty is maintained through a strict disciplinary code, supported by violence and intimidation to instil fear in those who consider narking or who have a desire to leave the gang (Clarke, 1998, p.A:5; Christian, 1998, p.5; Clausen, 1998, p.5). One Christchurch man, who claimed to be a member of this gang, was said to have stolen from the gang's cannabis supplies and to have used intravenous drugs, which went held down while his finger was cut off. He was also fined

\$1200 by the gang and was against the gang's code. As a result he was summoned to the gang headquarters where he was reminded not to nark. The victim, now in a witness protection programme, has expressed fears that the gang will still get to him and make him pay further for providing evidence against the gang. The perpetrators, Ivan Gugich and Greg Dunnill were convicted of this crime and were sentenced to eight years and seven-and-one-half years respectively jail for their actions (Clausen, 1998, p.5; *Press*, 30 May 1998).

Other examples of the extreme violence used by this gang include death threats against a family during a drug dealing associated extortion attempt and the murder of Hemi Hutley on the West Coast in November 1996. Aaron Howie and Neihana Foster were both sentenced to life imprisonment for the racially motivated killing of this popular Maori sportsman. Meanwhile, the Road Knights also have been known to support local skinhead activity and their involvement in a standoff between Carl Rolander and the police, and his subsequent funeral serves as an example:

Carl Rolander, a skinhead with prominent Nazi symbols tattooed on his forehead, escaped from Paparua Prison on February 8, 1996. He had been serving seven and a half years, for his part in the aggravated assault and kidnapping of the Redcliffs New World Supermarket proprietor in March 1992. After the police found Rolander hiding in a Christchurch house, some thirteen days after he escaped, they tried to negotiate with him to come out voluntarily. He refused and a three-hour standoff took place. Finally, Rolander shot himself. When the police entered the house, Rolander was found dead, holding a sawn-off shotgun (*Press*, 15 August 1996). To the White Power and the Road Knights, Rolander died like a true martyr. He had taught himself to speak some German and being a man who was anti-authority, who was well versed in, and committed to, the ideology of Nazism and White Power, Rolander was accorded respect within the Road Knights.

It was believed that he held a relatively high status within the gang itself. At his funeral Rolander received the gang's and the White Power's neo-Nazi honours, which included the draping of a Nazi flag over his coffin and Nazi saluting. This was somewhat ironic, as he had previous connections with North Island Black Power members and that he had a Black Power fist tattooed on his chest (Jeffries, 1996, p.15). Rumours were rampant around the time of Rolander's death with regards to his escape and death. One rumour circulating suggested that Rolander's ashes were made into a shrine at the Road Knights' headquarters, which later became a matter of contention when some people wanted him laid to rest for good.

While the media followed Rolander's case with much vigour, the emphasis was placed on his violent offending and his desire to 'take out' as many police as possible (*Press*, 23 Feb. 1996). This meant that his connections with the Road Knights and neo-Nazism, while

mentioned in the media did not generate much in the way of public dismay or alarm. When the West Auckland's version of the neo-Nazi extremists hit the media headlines in 1997, however, this was not the case. Unit 88, another white supremacist type gang, stole some of the limelight from the Road Knights and the other South Island extremists groups with an overt and active recruitment drive.

Many white power groups are Christchurch based and operate mainly in the South Island. Compared to the other parts of the country, Christchurch is still strongly Pakeha/European in ethnic origin (*Press*, 21 Nov. 1997) and this enables some white power supporters to openly express their racist and bigoted beliefs and attitudes. In the more multicultural areas of the country, blatant racism and racial intolerances are quickly challenged. Unit 88 is one exception. This crew was co-founded by Karl Warlock, also possibly known as Wes, was established in Auckland in 1988. Colin King-Ansell, the former leader of the New Zealand Nazi Party and of the National Socialist White People's Party, was also known to have had an active role within this gang. Media reports presented King-Ansell as one of the gang's mentors (*The Jenny Anderson Show*, Radio Pacific, 19 Nov. 1997; *NZ Herald*, 18 Nov. 1997; *Press*, 18 Nov. 1997). Unit 88 members wanted to work towards Hitler's vision of a true white race (*NZ Herald*, 20 Nov. 1997) and have been theoretically informed by historical writings from Hitler's Third Reich. It has also been stated that they have connections with American survivalist extremists groups (*Press*, 18 Nov. 1997).

Leaflets distributed by Unit 88 during their recruitment drive in November 1997 breached New Zealand's anti-discrimination laws. The group had advertised the existence of a youth division from which they hoped to teach youth "to keep their blood pure, to keep their ancestral lines pure" (Bingham, 1997, p. A:3). When rationalising such rhetoric, Wes claimed that the goals of Unit 88 were:

...to create a trust to get people motivated, to get people out of the gutter type thing, to get a good attitude within themselves and to be able to look after their own families and basically have a reasonable sort of life without resorting to violence, crime or drugs.

(Wes, 1997 on the *Jenny Anderson Show*, Radio Pacific, Nov. 19)

He further stated that his members wanted to be able to stand up and be proud that they are white New Zealanders. "Maori believe in supremacy and their ancestral lines [and] the

Negroes trace their ancestral lines back. Why not us?" he asked. Unit 88 argued that keeping the bloodlines pure was not racist, but of a purist philosophy (Bingham, 1997, p.A:3).

When Unit 88's existence hit the media headlines, the gang had attempted to recruit new members in the Manawatu and Bay of Plenty regions, Nelson and Oamaru. Karl Warlock advised the media that Auckland had an active skinhead community similar to Christchurch (*Press*, 17 Nov. 1997). The general public remained quietly dismayed while only a few concerned individuals, community representatives and the Race Relations Conciliator, Dr Rajen Prasad, expressed their disapproval at the reported neo-Nazi activity. And, it has been alleged, members of Black Power, the Mongrel Mob and the Headhunters responded quickly. They said that they were willing to resort to street justice to curb Unit 88's progress because they did not want racial intolerance, such as that expressed in the Christchurch region, to take hold in the North Island (*NZ Herald*, 20 Nov. 1997). In Christchurch a similar recruitment drive had occurred.

The Fascist Union, which includes a number of white supremacist groups or gangs, was connected to the distribution of recruitment leaflets in several Christchurch suburbs. The leaflets sought "young patriots" (*Press*, 16 Dec. 1997) to become involved in a fascist youth group. Under an image of a paramilitary figure the leaflet stated:

Youth
Wanted.

Young patriots are needed for the formation of a fascist youth group.
If you love your race and nation and have the courage to defend your homeland...
Join Now!

(*Press*, 16 Dec. 1997)

Later media sources revealed connections between these leaflets and a community agency that supported the local skinheads. Many people were left wondering why these groups were developing or had become an interest for youth.

The Social Context.

The increase in white supremacist, neo-Nazi type gangs and Fascism outlined above has been linked more to socio-economic conditions than to a fervent commitment to Hitlerian

ideological principles and practices. In America, it has been argued that in recent years there has been a 40 percent increase in the number of white supremacist reactionary groups. These produce literature and the increasing availability of this through Internet websites and so forth may account for the 'copycat' type increase of similar groups in New Zealand. In America some attribute this increased activity to major reforms in the political economy, which have resulted in numerous redundancies amongst the white, blue-collar workforce (World News Tonight, TV3, 24 Feb. 1999). It has been reported that increased social tensions in America have arisen around:

...poverty, the decay of basic services like education and health care, and the increasing polarization of society between a fabulously wealthy elite and the vast majority who must struggle to make ends meet.

(McLaughlin, 1998.)

And that those tensions have:

Instead of being directed into a political struggle against the economic system which is responsible for the growing social misery, the anger over deteriorating conditions festers and is subject to be diverted into reactionary channels.

(ibid.)

In New Zealand, skinheads or White Power gang members are typically from poor backgrounds. They have often come from dysfunctional families with histories of trauma going back sometimes two or three generations. Many have borne the consequences of poor educational attainment, and/or drug and alcohol related problems (Harris, 1999). Often unemployed, they have been described as society's "poor white people" (Ansley, 1997, p.29), who feel angry, alienated and rejected by a society that basically ignores their position and struggle.

Since 1984 New Zealand's workforce has been revamped, guided by the ideologies of neo-liberalism and the New Right. With emphasis on the free-market and profitability, this workforce restructuring has led to massive blue-collar job lay-offs and redundancies, which have included many Pakeha youth. At the same time reforms to the welfare system were put in place. These reforms included the 1991 benefit cuts and tighter eligibility criteria, which have made it more difficult for the unemployed to participate in and feel a part of society (St John, 1994, pp.89-93). During 1997, unemployment continued to rise. Reports indicate that net job losses during that year stood between 8,000 to 11,000, most of which were from areas

like manufacturing where workers previously had relied on their manual efforts to secure a reasonable income. These job losses were up 1.9 per cent on the previous year (*Press*, 22 Dec. 1997). As the divide between the rich and the poor has deepened, many young white youth have become alienated and disillusioned. Some have become resentful and/or jealous of those who appear to be succeeding, either work, income or education wise. Many see more government support going to immigrants, and particularly Asian immigrants, who are adapting to New Zealand society while support for New Zealanders has been cut. They also argue that there is plenty of support initiated for 'at risk' Maori and 'at risk' Pacific Islanders while no one is catering to the needs of white/pakeha youth (Harris, 1999).

As outlined earlier, many skinheads are vulnerable persons, who have emerged from traumatic backgrounds, and have tried to find something that will give their lives hope and meaning. In the current political economy many skinheads or White Power youth believe that society has no real interest or commitment towards them or their concerns. In this sense they have felt and feel as though society has nothing to offer them. Joining up with a white/Pakeha orientated gang has become a viable option that enables young skinheads or white/Pakeha youth to feel supported, and to secure a sense of belonging. The gangs, be they choose to align with Unit 88, White Power, the Road Knights or affiliate themselves to the Fascist Union, provide an avenue in which, and from which, these youth can release and express their views and concerns. Some city administrators, in Christchurch for example, have taken action and have tried to address problems relating to this particular sector of society.

In Christchurch the link between unemployment and skinhead or White Power activity had been recognised a number of years earlier by the city's councillors. In February 1994, the Christchurch City Council and the Safer Community Council had provided funding, \$15,000 and \$35,000 respectively, towards the operating costs of the New Way Trust, a community agency that worked with the local skinhead population. The Trust, originally promoted by Kyle Chapman and others during 1992-1993, was established as an attempt to curb racial tensions that had been simmering, and had sometimes erupted in the Christchurch region. The Trust aimed to support young skinheads, some of whom were second or third generation skinheads, to make positive changes in their lives and as an attempt to divert the youth away from the gang involvement. To achieve these goals Trust members and youth advocates assisted young skinheads into employment, to seek counselling for drug and/or alcohol abuse and addictions, and to deal with legal issues. Workers also helped when these youth had

problems with governmental agencies such as Income Support (Addison, 1995, pp.35-38; Bruce, 1997, p.1; Harris, 1999; *Press*, 20 Dec. 1997).

Clearly the work of the Trust had been valued and supported within the wider Christchurch community (see Ansley, 1997, p.28), but in late 1997 the Trust came into disrepute. When the Fascist Union held its recruitment drive in Christchurch that year, the Union had used the New Way Trust's Post Office box number, although the Trust sought to distance itself from the racist recruitment literature. The media then reported that one of the Trust's founders, Kyle Chapman, a 'skinhead-turned-social worker' (Bruce, 1997, p.1), who in February 1995 had admitted to a number of racially motivated crimes. These included arson, unlawfully possessing explosives and intentional damage, such as the "bombing of a marae in Southland" (ibid). Understandably, the public was appalled to find that Chapman had received ratepayers' funds. Within a short time the New Way Trust, a project initiated to support young skinheads, closed its doors (Harris, 1999).

It appears as though "skinheads are easy to loathe" (Ansley, 1997, p.29). It is not difficult to condemn them for their overtly racist and sometimes violent practices and symbolism. While, conversely, it is more complex to unpack, identify and deal with the underlying social conditions that facilitate the growth of the staunch white orientated type gangs and neo-Nazism. As Ansley succinctly explains:

[It is] easy to dump the whole racist embarrassment on their unlovely heads and argue that everything could be solved by hiring more social workers or more police, or putting them in jail, or dumping them on the Chathams, depending on your point of view.

(1997, p.29)

But Councillor, now mayor, Garry Moore reminds:

They're [skinheads and/or vulnerable white/Pakeha youth] angry, alienated. Hitler built up a whole movement from these sorts of people and our society ignores them at our peril.

(Cited in Ansley, 1997, p.29)

Professor Paul Spoonley at Massey University, Albany, has indicated that the neo-Nazi type skinheads or white power crews have become a worry for many democracies. Countries like Britain, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium and France have experienced similar

developments. Spoonley argues that the politics of neo-Nazism, skinheadism, or whitepower are now “well and truly established among some gangs ... [and] will not be easily dislodged from the community” (Spoonley, 1997, p A:19). A modern medium that facilitates the growth of neo-Nazism and the Whitepower throughout the world is the Internet websites. Political views, recruitment propaganda and extensive documents about the Nazis are now available on ‘skinsites’ to inform the both young and impressionable, and the young and vulnerable with the push of a few buttons (Bingham & Boland, 1997, p.A:15). Likewise other white supremacist networks, including those of the Ku Klux Klan also are easily accessible via websites, which promulgate racist ideology and support the use of violence against people of colour (See Appendix II – A sample of skinsites available from a White Power Directory). While these developments are daunting enough there have been a number of newer gangs emerging within minority cultures that are worth considering.

The Rise of Los Angeles Style Street Gangs: Homies, Gangsters, Siders and Bitches.

Youth culture, ever dynamic and rapidly changing, is always difficult to define. Each new generation of teenagers, often highlighted within the media and incorporated into the fashion industry, makes their own culture (Perry cited in Schaer, 1993, p.34). During the 1990s two prominent strains of youth culture emerged that could be presented as symbolic reactions against the previously established forms of youth culture such as, the punk rockers and the ‘yuppies’ of the 1980s. The first of the two most recent strains has been identified as the Seattle ‘grunge’ rock ‘n’ roll trend, in which teenagers have adopted, almost, a revivalist hippie philosophy. The second strain identified, which more readily fits into the context of gangs, includes the anti-establishment – ‘rap’ neighbourhood groups that follow the Los Angeles style urban street gangs (Schaer, 1993, p. 35).

Throughout New Zealand concern has been expressed about the growth in the number of neighbourhood street gangs that have involved children aged as young as 10 years (Taalalo, 1995, p.13). Although these groups, usually running along ethnic lines, are not organised or structured in the same way as the Mongrel Mob, Black Power or the traditional motor-cycle gangs, they still maintain a degree of uniformity and symbolism that makes them identifiable to other youth groups. These groups come under a wide assortment of labels, which have included the following:

Homies	Homeboys
Bloods	R.S.P. [Respect Samoan Pride]
K.C.B. [Tongan Crypts]	G.Ms. [Glen Avon Mafia]
Westside Bitches	Henderson Bitches
Crips	Gangsters
Eastsiders	Westsiders
Southsiders	Northsiders
Tongan Mafia	B.A.D.S. [Black & Dangerous Society]
Boo Yaa Tribe	Boulevard Homeboys
Sons of Samoa	E.H.Bs. [East Hampshire Boys]
RGs [Ruthless Greens]	M.T.Gs. [Maori Tribal Gangsters]

(Compiled from Addison, 1995, pp.90-91; Andrae, 1998, p.58; Barton, 1993, p.9; Local Government New Zealand, 1997, Appendix. p.2; Taalalo, 1995, p.13)

Of these gangs, the Bloods and the Crips, identifiable through their 'colours' or bandannas, and the Homies have been listed as national gangs as they exist in small pockets throughout New Zealand's urban centres. There is little or no evidence, however, to suggest that these particular gangs have become nationally coordinated or structured.

In a generalised sense, the gangs listed above and others like them, are identifiable, in part, through their dress code. This usually consists of unisex baggy jeans or cargo pants combined with, and preferably, expensive imported label-brand jackets, sweatshirts, T-shirts, beanies, caps and sports shoes. As with the Los Angeles American ghetto street cultures, these clothes symbolise success, either monetary or muscular, for teenagers from lower socio-economic areas (Gourley, 1992, p.86; Schaer, 1993, p.37). And while it could be argued in general that teenagers outside these groups also strive to obtain such clothing, differences occur in terms of accessing such items. Conventions within the groups listed above suggest that the teenagers involved have developed a 'might is right', survival-of-the-fittest type attitude, which enables them to secure such clothing through theft, coercion and thuggery when legitimate avenues seem to be blocked. The stealing of clothes and other goods has been linked to deprivation, as one youth rationalised:

I ain't got it and I ain't gonna get it any other way.
(cited in Barton, 1993, p.9).

In addition to a particular dress practice, teenagers belonging to neighbourhood street gangs are further recognised through their language expression. Many of these teenagers have adopted 'ghetto speak', a form of language and gestures that closely follow media

representations of the American street cultures. This language and symbolism is readily seen in movies, like *Boyz n the Hood*, [released on video in 1991] and has been portrayed in rap music and video clips. Rap music facilitates the adoption of this language and continually keeps it fresh and alive by adding additional nuances and meanings (Barton, 1993, p.9; Schaer, 1993, p.37; Taalalo, 1995, p.14). The symbolism involves a complex system of hand signals that, among other things, is used to indicate the name of the group or the area from which these teenagers emerge. For example, the Bloods used their fingers to spell the word 'Blood', while Westsiders twist and shape their fingers to represent a 'W' for Westside.

In terms of identification, these groups are known also for their 'tagging' or spray painting symbolic inscriptions on fences, sides of buildings and in other public places. However, it is important to acknowledge that not every tagger belongs to a neighbourhood street gang. For some, tagging is simply a means to alleviate boredom, tagging is seen as a source of fun or play that involves elements of risk and challenge (Moore, 1995, p.5). Generally, taggers, whether group associated or not, are believed to mark their 'home turf' or, in a very loose sense, to lay claim to territory through their tagging efforts (Barton, 1993, p.9; Lindsey & Kearns, 1994, p.8). Research by Lindsey and Kearns (1994, pp.7-13) indicates that this marking of territory is more about self-proclamation or group proclamation than any real need to demarcate strict territorial boundaries that require any aspect of conquest or defence. Field observations of taggers in the Auckland region have revealed that these graffiti writing youth groups remain relatively powerless to defend the territories that they have marked. The taggers themselves tend to distance themselves from gang type affiliations and claim that gangs "don't bother about graffiti" (Taggers, cited in Lindsey & Kearns, 1994, p.10). New Zealand's traditional gangs, for example Black Power and the Mongrel Mob, do not use graffiti, and their territories are more likely to be known through the visible presence of gang members in their easily recognisable regalia and patches. This leads to some debate as to whether these neighbourhood type groupings are in fact gangs or merely groups of youth.

While authorities and the public are inclined to view these youth groups as gangs the teenagers involved are reluctant to talk about their involvement in gang type activity. Some of these youth believe that the 'real gangs' are those that display patches like the Mongrel Mob or Black Power. Some of the youth involved will argue that 'pulling a Westside' sign, wearing the baggy, labelled clothing and hanging about in a group does not mean that they are involved with a gang. 'Pulling a Westside', they say, just means that they recognise someone

from the same community or neighbourhood (Westsiders, 1999, personal communication). Other neighbourhood youth or group members, however, are able to report on and identify those involved in the neighbourhood street gangs in their area (Local Government New Zealand, 1997, Appendix 1, pp.3 & 5). Moving about the city and community in-groups, some of the teenagers indicate is more a matter of protection and support than anything else.

In Christchurch, for example, groups of Maori and Pacific Island teenagers have reported to the media that they have a real need to go everywhere, if possible, in groups to avoid overt racist and violent attacks from carloads of skinheads. Christchurch reporter, Diane Keenan (1994, p.4) argues that:

Experience has taught them [Maori and Pacific Island teenagers] not to go out alone and to avoid the recognised skinhead haunts.

The confrontations are frightening, the taunts hurtful. If you have dark skin and like to wear baggy pants, the streets of Christchurch are no longer safe, they say.

This need to stay safe readily fits alongside the other, more generally accepted motives for group or gang membership such as, the need for acceptance, belonging, discipline and rule, and a common purpose (Barton, 1993, p.9). Other explanations have situated the emergence and growth of these neighbourhood street gangs within the context of deprivation. Poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment and family dysfunction have all been recorded as factors contributing to this growth. Bill Davey, a youth aid officer with the police argues that the teenagers involved came from families with “the least income, which means the least control, which means the least value for education and convention” (cited in Barton, 1993, p.9). As the neighbourhood street gangs attract many Maori and Pacific Island teenagers and members from these cultures number highly in the recorded unemployment figures this argument holds some credibility. But other factors may have contributed to this growth.

Those involved in New Zealand’s rap scene, such as Otis Frizzel, from the rap duo, ‘MOCJ and Rhythm Slave’, suggests that:

One of the reasons a lot of the Maori, Samoan, and Tongan homeboys are getting into American culture could be because their own culture has been shunned by everyone else.... They might be into their own scene more if there was a more positive attitude towards it [their own culture].

But it's really good that they've found some sort of style and culture that they can relate to so much.

(Cited in Allison, 1991, p.130)

The first tides of rap music to emerge out of the American ghetto cultures were an expression of anger at the system or the status quo (Schaer, 1993, p.35), which appears to have appealed to many teenagers, especially within Maori and Pacific Island communities. But as rap music became more popular and commercialised over the last decade there has been a gradual shift in the messages it relays. The 'bad boy/bad girl image' message has slightly altered to include lyrics which contain a more positive light, around peace, love and or passing "good vibes to your fellow man" (Frizzel cited in Allison, 1991, p.130).

While some, like Frizzel, view the adoption of the American 'rap culture' in a relatively light-hearted but positive light others, remain somewhat guarded and cynical. For example, writer Garth Cartwright (1989) suggests that the willingness of young Maori and Pacific Island teenagers to absorb and adopt these 'Americanisms' merely illustrate how fragile our culture really is. Cartwright prompts readers to consider 'rap culture' in terms of an ever-continuing colonisation process. Accordingly, he argues that "the US once again colonises our subconscious" (Cartwright, 1989, p.104) with music, being a medium that can draw people together through shared identity and a spirit of hope, readily facilitating this colonisation process.

As with most youth cultures the rap culture that includes the neighbourhood street gangs will lose its attraction to youth once the trend becomes incorporated into mainstream society. Auckland sociologist, Nick Perry, says:

They've got to keep that insider-versus-outsider thing going. As soon as a fashion becomes popular, it's no longer fashionable.

(Cited in Schaer, 1993, p.34)

Already, some of the 'real' rappers and neighbourhood street gangs have moved on, having disbanded or changed their style slightly. By all accounts, the neighbourhood street gangs, being unstructured with no clear leadership frameworks, will tend to fade away in time as the youth involved age and settle back into mainstream society, in a process that may be similar to the disappearance of the bodgies and widgie groups of the 1950s. Even so, there has been

considerable concern expressed about the neighbourhood youth gangs particularly in relation to violence.

Media reports indicate that the more hardened neighbourhood street gangs have committed aggravated assaults and robberies while the less entrenched “younger wannabe gangsters” (Taalalo, 1995, p.13) have been busy beating up other teenagers and involving themselves in petty theft and other minor dishonesty crimes. Many of the concerns expressed have emerged from cases where children as young as twelve years have been involved in serious violence. In New Zealand, Barton explains:

Juvenile crime isn't about stealing apples and busting windows any more.
Mayhem, even murder – that's what kid stuff is today.
(1993, p.9)

These child gangsters have been reported as being involved in long running battles with the Christchurch Skinheads between 1993 and 1997. They also have been reported as causing havoc by terrorising locals in Nelson, West Auckland, South Auckland, Hastings, Fielding, Wellington, Waitakere, Palmerston North and Whangarei (Barton, 1993, p.9; Keenan, 1994, p.4; Local Government New Zealand, 1997, pp. 6, 9, & 20; Wall, 1996, p.A:14; Taalalo, 1995, pp.13-14). Media reports have highlighted a number of separate killings that have resulted in charges of murder being laid against youth under the age of 18. These reports indicate that the youth involved had not intended to go out and kill people. They have got caught up within the collective dynamics of the group, a process that, within this particular context, is often based on a system or pattern of dares and risk taking (Barton, 1993, p.9).

Many of these teenagers see crime as a bit of excitement; the ‘buzz’ or thrill comes from getting away with petty theft or other dishonesty offences, bullying and standover tactics. Often they do not realise the hurt that they inflict on others and they tend to display little or no remorse for their actions (Taalalo, 1995, p.13). Gradually, [as being young they cannot afford more legitimate forms of entertainment], these minor crimes become “part and parcel of the young gangster’s night out” (Barton, 1993, p.9). Soon these teenagers may find themselves caught up in more serious offending, such as aggravated robbery or homicide which lead them towards custodial sentences in the secure units run by Child, Youth and Family Services Department or prison, dependent upon the teenagers actual age at the time of detention

(Taalalo, 1995, p.13). For some of the teenagers these crimes are just a matter of survival emerging out of poverty and unemployment. Theft and thuggery are simply treated as a means to secure the property, status or respect.

Other concerns emphasise that the neighbourhood street gangs are fertile recruitment grounds for the more established traditional gangs and that some of these youth have been contracted to work for the more established gangs (Gardiner, 1996, p.7; Ferguson, 1996, p.13). There also have been reports that indicate that these teenagers are willing to 'take the rap' or to own up to offences that in actuality have been committed by their 'patch-membered cousins' (Ferguson, 1996, p.13). While a few of the teenagers caught up in the neighbourhood street gangs may gravitate towards the structured type gangs, and the possibility of their becoming involved in more organised crime is evident, youth workers and former gang members are quick to draw attention back to the wider social issues that have impacted on youth in recent years.

For more than a decade the government has attempted to reduce state spending by minimising its role in welfare provision through widespread benefit cuts and enforcing tighter eligibility criteria. Job creation schemes and employment-related education programmes have had a limited effect in terms of generating long term employment security for many in our society, including youth. And in general there has been a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, and the haves and the have-nots (St John, 1994, pp.89-93). Youth workers and those linked in with the gangs put the responsibility for youth involvement in gangs back on the community at large. Davey, a police youth aid worker, said:

You reap what you sow and if you don't sow stability and education and vision and care in your community then you get what you are getting.

...don't blame the kids. They are products of an environment. We have created in this country an environment which is selfish, in which we pursue our interests to the exclusion of other people. Frankly, we deserve what we are getting [or what we have got].

(Cited in Barton, 1993, p.9)

Primarily, issues related to unemployment, poverty, deprivation and marginalisation, family breakdown and other related trauma, hopelessness and boredom are all factors that facilitate gang membership, whatever the gang type may be (Barton, 1993, p.9; Taalalo, 1995, p.14).

Ironically, these are the very same contextual factors that were recognised by the Committee on Gangs (1981, pp.6-9) as facilitating the growth of gangs and gang membership during the late 1960s and 1970s. One could surmise that little has really changed for at risk youth over the years in spite of a number of programmes that have been initiated to assist youth in recent times. And the attempts to quash the gangs and to reduce gang violence have been the main focus of intervention strategies while basic structural conditions that encourage gang growth and membership remain unaddressed.

While violence, gang related or not, has remained a highly publicised social problem that New Zealand, like other industrialised countries is trying to deal with, over the last decade or more there has been a shift in the way gangs have been represented in the media, by police and politicians alike. Gone are the days when comment focused solely on gang warfare and territorial battles. Nowadays the emphasis has been orientated more towards the worrying issue of ongoing organised crime and the activities of the big gang, drug dealing crime syndicates.

Gang-Related Organised Crime in the 1990s.

Organised crime is not a new phenomenon within New Zealand society with “sporadic instances ...[occurring since] the 1860s” (Newbold, 1997, p.75), but it is a relatively new area in terms of a specific social concern. During the late 1960s and 1970s much attention was given to the need to curb the ever-prevalent issue of gang violence (Walker, 1996, p.148) and there was little disquiet expressed about the gangs being involved in organised crime. Generally, organised crime was considered an international problem that the New Zealand Police were well aware of. In 1962, the then Commissioner of Police, Mr. C.L. Spencer, having returned from Europe and the United States with a greater understanding of the big crime syndicates like Murder Incorporated and the Mafia, was reported as being determined to keep organised crime out of New Zealand (*NZ Truth*, 13 Nov. 1962). And in 1965 the police had established a Vice Squad that dealt with, and monitored drug offending and isolated instances of organised crime (Newbold, 1992, p.116).

Incidents of organised crime were becoming more evident in New Zealand during the early 1970s and were generally tied up with the recreational drug taking. The establishment of New Zealand's National Drug Intelligence Bureau in 1972 enabled knowledge of drug-taking practices and illegal drug trafficking, both here and internationally, to accumulate. Clearly, it

can be seen that LSD, an illegal hallucinogenic, and cannabis sativa, or marijuana became popular recreational drugs in New Zealand during the late 1960s and the early 1970s. The demand for heroin was also observed, as the drug had been popularised by the big international rock bands of that era. Accordingly, it did not take long for New Zealand's criminal sector to capitalise on the massive profits that could be generated through the illegal drug trade (Newbold, 1992, p.118).

Of significance here are the lucrative illegal drug importing ventures of the 'Mr Asia' syndicate, which operated during the 1970s and "represents the only time in New Zealand history that an organized criminal enterprise has operated on a major scale" (Newbold, 1997, p.76).

This gang/group, under the leadership of Christopher Martin Johnstone, commonly referred to as 'Mr.Asia' and his chief henchman and partner, Terrence John Clark, alias Alexander Sinclair, once a small-time crook, ran a large-scale operation importing marijuana and heroin into New Zealand from Thailand. By all accounts, Johnstone was responsible for planning the importation process and for sourcing the drugs within Asia, while Clark dealt with the distribution side when the drugs arrived here. Coming to the police's attention in 1975, Clark was arrested and charged in relation to bringing heroin into Wellington. At the deposition conference, Clark protested his innocence by claiming that the police had set him up. Initially bail was refused, but when subsequently granted, Clark jumped bail and moved his business dealings to Australia where he operated relatively freely with the cooperation of corrupt police for some time. During April 1979, he moved to England and set up his own network, although he still needed Johnstone to handle the initial supply of drugs.

While both Johnstone and Clark became multi-millionaires through their ventures, all was not as it seemed. Johnstone was an extravagant spender who found himself in financial strife. He borrowed some \$250,000 from Clark, hoping to trade his way out of his financial difficulty. Johnstone got ripped off during his next drug purchase, his contacts in Thailand replaced the heroin with crushed aspirin and Johnstone was left with no money and no drugs. This appears to have led to his demise as Clark ordered Johnstone's execution, which was carried out on October 7, 1979. Clark was later convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. The collapse of this enterprise reduced the amount of heroin and imported marijuana that was available here and opened the way for gangs to become increasingly involved in this area (Booth, 1980, cover; Newbold, pp.76-78; Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drug Trafficking, 1983, pp.44-49 & 81; Williams, 1998, pp.68-73 & 154-157).

By 1987, organised crime within the New Zealand context was coming under closer scrutiny. The Committee of Inquiry into Violence (1987, p.89) reported that this was an area that needed close monitoring, particularly with regards to New Zealand's gang situation. As noted

the gangs by this time had become more organised and sophisticated; with some reportedly having forged international connections. The gangs' role in the drug dealing area was of particular concern, as this activity had become a valued source of income for both the gangs as institutions and individual gang members (Newbold, 1997, p.80). At this point, it is important to bear in mind that there are some distinctions, albeit ambiguous at times, between 'gang business' - activities that are coordinated on behalf of, and generate profit for the gang itself, and 'a gang member's business' - activities that are individually driven that may involve other gang members (Neale, 1998; Stokes, 1998).

Clearly, the vast majority of offending is carried out on an individual basis (Stokes, 1998) and this has, and can make it difficult for law enforcers to carry out their work. Being a member of a gang provides an additional layer protection from the law, the kind of which is not normally taken for granted by those outside the gang context. The gang itself provides a source of willing criminal entrepreneurs who are generally well versed in the 'code of silence' and understand the likely consequences of narking on fellow gang members, associates or their activities. This suggests that gangs, be they the local homegrown variety or the more exotic imported strains, provide fertile conditions in which organised criminal activity can flourish. Furthermore, police have found it hard to infiltrate some of the gangs.

The top brass are untouchable. A network of 'prospects', associates and 'agents' act as a buffer zone. Prospects do much of the gang's dirty work, along with the agents. (Agents are those who hope to become prospects.) Their names are the ones that get known and so they are the ones who tend to get caught. Full members and those in the hierarchy tend to avoid day-to-day involvement in crime.

(Andrae, 1991, p.1629)

To compound matters, media reports during 1989 indicated that the police had evidence that the Asian crime syndicate were beginning to operate their drug dealing syndicates within New Zealand (Grainger, 1989, p.3). This engendered a flurry of subsequent articles that drew attention to both organised crime and illegal drug trafficking networks. Gang members, however, are still more likely to be serving time in prison for violence than drug dealing (Newbold, 1997, p.80). From the late 1980s to the present day, gang related organised crime has been presented periodically in the media as a disturbing social problem and as time has gone by the connection between gangs, illegal drug distribution and organised crime have been illuminated, as the following newspaper headlines indicate:

Police Say Drug Case Evidence of Triads.

(Sunday Star-Times, 28 Sept. 1989, p.3)

Triads: Notorious Crime Gangs Come to Town.

(Evening Post, 28 Sept. 1991, p.24)

Triads' Kiwi Connections.

(Sunday Star-Times, 2 Oct. 1994, p.A:4)

**Eastside Story: Wealthy Asian kids are
Fighting Gang Wars in the Streets of Auckland.**

(Listener, 13 Jan. 1996, p.26)

Ganging up for Greater Profit.

(Evening Post, 24 Dec. 1996, p.15)

MP Urges New Laws to Overcome Crime Syndicates in New Zealand.

(Press, 8 Oct. 1997, p.11)

Blame on Gangs for the Big Crimes.

(Press, 18 Sept. 1998, p.3)

**Gangs Plot War on Cops: Organised International Crime Gangs
are Recruiting New Blood in
New Zealand.**

(NZ Truth, 10 April 1998, p.1)

Softly, Softly Approach Nets Police Big Gang Drug Bust.

(Press, 28 July 1998, p.5)

How Gang Made Millions.

(NZ Herald, 24-25 July 1999, p.1)

With the increase in organised criminal activity, there has been a need for some clarification of the phenomenology and the characteristics of organised crime have been outlined by the New Zealand Police as follows:

- The criminal activity must be continuing.
 - The activity must involve profit.
 - The activity must involve a group of persons.
 - The activity must be accompanied by the use of fear and violence.
- (Cited in Newbold, 1997, pp.75-76)*

The most significant factor that sets organised crime apart from corporate white-collar crime carried out by groups of people, is the element of fear. This is generated through the use of

violence, the threat of violence, intimidation and/or coercion against both victims and witnesses as well as the criminal groups' own members. Furthermore, legislative amendments and new laws have been initiated and put in place, which further empower police in their crack down on gangs and organised criminal activity.

Within these laws, a 'criminal gang' has been defined as any group, organisation or association, whether formally or informally contrived, of three or more persons where at least three members of the group have been convicted of a serious offence, such as outlined in subsection (1) of the Crimes Amendment Act (No.2) 1997 (Cited in *Ten-one*, 1997, pp.11-13, see Appendix XI). This Act makes it an offence to participate in a criminal gang knowing that it is a criminal gang; and to intentionally promote or further any conduct by any member of that gang that amounts to an offence or offences punishable by imprisonment. This Act does not make it unlawful to be a member of a gang as it is pitched at those who encourage others to commit offences, but who are generally not responsible for the crime itself. However, when tied up with the Summary of Offences Amendment Act 1997 and the Harassment Act 1997 it becomes illegal to associate with gang members who are known to engage in criminal activity (See Appendice XI).

On the Gang Front.

The Hell's Angels, a small but tight grouping of about 22 patched members in New Zealand, have been assigned a 'mantle of superiority' in terms of their sophistication and ability to run and sustain their operations, legal or otherwise, in a relatively unobstructed way (Andrae, 1998, p.58; Brook, 1996, p.15; Newbold, 1997, pp.78-83). The two New Zealand chapters, situated in Auckland and Wanganui, are a part of the most influential outlaw motorcycle network within the western world. There are three dominant outlaw motorcycle gangs with international connections, the Hell's Angels, the Outlaws and the Bandidos. And there have been unsubstantiated reports that these groups were involved in financially motivated negotiations in 1993, which involved, it was surmised, a corporate global takeover plan. And a written agreement of cooperation was said to be put in place (Leask, 1998, p.5; Newbold, 1997, p.81).

Internationally, the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club, as of August 1997, has an estimated membership of 1,600 connected to some 123 chapters spread throughout the world, which

facilitate their drug trafficking operations that are believed to be their main source of income. By the year 2000, the Hell's Angels are anticipated to have no less than 140 chapters with six new chapters in the United States and two in Canada expected to come to the fore by then (RCMP Organised Crime Initiative, 1998). The Hell's Angels are known to be opportunistic and flexible in their enterprises. Their operations have been known to also include; arson, blackmail, corruption, extortion, forgery, fraud, gun running, kidnapping, white slave trading, loan sharking, motor vehicle theft, prostitution, rape and murder. Alongside these activities, the Hell's Angels operate legitimate businesses such as; bars, restaurants, auto salvage and wreckage yards, trucking firms, antique and gun stores, entertainment companies, and massage parlours. These legitimate enterprises not only provide employment opportunities for club members but also function as fronts to launder illegal earnings (Lavigne, 1987, pp.101-107).

Club business, illegal or otherwise, is taken seriously, following good business practices. Strict accountability processes have been established; they know the benefit of maintaining strict quality control and the pitfalls of trading with inferior goods or services. As a former Hell's Angel from New York reports:

Selling somethin' bad would be putting my patch on the line. That's against the rules.
.... The Hell's Angels, we're in business to make money. But it gets around when
we're scum....

(Cited in Lavigne, 1987, pp.92-93)

In New Zealand, as with the international chapters, the Hell's Angels have worked to maintain a low public profile and to outwardly create a better public image while remaining criminally active. Gone are the days of ostentatious display as members now prefer to blend in with their environments and deflect undue attention from law enforcers, as this becomes disruptive to the gang business process. Conspicuousness is now regarded as a weakness, although the death's head patch is still highly valued being reserved for ceremonial purposes at initiations, funerals, on club runs and so forth (Lavigne, 1987, pp. 88-90; Leask, 1998, p.5). With the accumulation of wealth, the Hell's Angels have been able to secure the latest hi-tech equipment not only to thwart police surveillance but also to monitor police communications. Avoiding detection and staying one step ahead of the police is merely an everyday aspect of a sophisticated drug-dealing network.

The Hell's Angels are believed to be the main source of LSD ['acid'] and methamphetamine, ['speed']. Like other gangs here, they are also believed to trade in black market weapons and engage with other criminal activities. Reports also indicate that they have been influential within Auckland's sex industry, and maintain considerable power within or over certain strip-clubs or massage parlours (Neale, 1998; Newbold, 1997, p.81; Stokes, 1998). The Hell's Angels are known to have formed strong alliances with other gangs such as the Headhunters and have formed cooperative affiliations with others (*Press*, 26 July 1999).

During 1996, media reports suggested that negotiations held between the Hell's Angels and the Road Knights had taken place in Christchurch. The Tauranga Filthy Few, the Tokoroa Huhu, and the Matamata Titans were also believed to be present at the meetings, in which a franchise type arrangement for drug distribution within the South Island was approved, (*Evening Post*, 24 Dec. 1996). Co-opting other motorcycle gangs in this way is a practice that has occurred elsewhere in the world by the larger motorcycle gangs, and in particular the Hell's Angels. Internationally, these "Puppet Clubs" (RCMP Organised Crime Initiative, 1998), as they are known, are reported to be no more than subservient groups that have been aligned with a major group to perform their 'dirty' business, like; murder, and acts of violence such as; arson and extortion. They also distribute and sell drugs, and often act as debt collectors when drug payments have defaulted. When carrying out such functions, puppet clubs work to insulate the Hell's Angels from prosecution and they facilitate the expansion of the Hell's Angels as a powerful institution in a way that minimises the sharing of the Hell's Angels' wealth and power. The chapters of the Hell's Angels that have negotiated with these puppet clubs are reported to control and supervise the activities on which the puppet clubs embark (*ibid*).

In New Zealand, however, the Road Knights appear to be simply another business association, another drug distribution outlet for the Hell's Angels. And whether other forms of 'gang business' are negotiated remains to be seen. These are not the only gangs competing for a share of New Zealand's illegal drug market. Highway 61 Motorcycle Club has proven itself to be a dominant force in the area and has been reported to have been involved in a power struggle with the Hell's Angels (Gardiner, 1996, p.7; Stokes, 1998).

Highway 61 have become increasingly sophisticated and well organised over the last decade or so, and as such have been granted an ambivalent sense of respect from those who are

connected to or who observe the gang scene in New Zealand. During 1996, Highway 61 were reported to have chapters established in Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, Taupo, Rotorua, Whangarei, Hastings, Otaki, and in the Hutt Valley. They also have chapters established in Adelaide and Sydney, Australia (Andrae, 1991, p.1628; Gardiner, 1996, p.7; Local Government New Zealand, 1997, p.6; *Press*, 24 June 1996). The Sydney connection is claimed to be “the linchpin for [their] LSD imports to New Zealand” (Andrae, 1991, p.1628).

Like the Hell’s Angels, the Highway 61 hierarchy has learned the benefits of maintaining a low profile and of improving their public image. Seldom do the leading members appear in court as generally it is the lower echelon of the gang; the prospects, associates and other hangers-on that come to the attention of the police (Andrae, 1991, p.1628; Neale, 1998; Stokes, 1998). In this sense the gang hierarchy are very wary of troublemakers who draw police and public attention towards the gang and there is a preference by some members in the club to get rid of these ‘bunnies’. The police acknowledge this but also believe that some of the ‘bunnies’ carry out work for the gang. ‘Bunnies’ is a term used to represent “those persons who will never become a member or a prospect but who will always be there because the gang has a purpose for them” (Neale, 1998). They help insulate the higher-level gang members from the strong arm of the law, as Gang Liaison officer, Richard Neale (1998) explains:

It’s well thought out, well insulated. There’re definitely no slugs in that group!

Highway 61 is reported to be quite wealthy. Good business practice has enabled this gang, like some others, to invest in modern electronic counter surveillance equipment and their ability to gather data has been credited a cautious respect (Neale, 1998; *Press*, 7 Nov. 1998). Some members of Highway 61 have been able to accumulate significant amounts of residential property; late-model Harley Davidsons, cars and so forth although seemingly unemployed. Reports also indicate that the club has been involved in legitimate business ventures for example, massage parlours, nightclubs or bars. Over the years gang members have been reported to run work-related courses from which it is believed that they have managed to siphon off large sums of public funds for private business enterprise (Andrae, 1991, p.1629; Neale, 1998). By all accounts these activities support a wide range of criminal activity, whether individually motivated not.

It has been reported that Highway 61 members have been involved in murder, firearm use and trafficking, the manufacture and trafficking of drugs, especially methamphetamine, LSD and cannabis, stolen car rackets, and prostitution (Andrae, 1991, p.1628; Neale, 1998; *Dominion*, 24 June 1996). Recent evidence given in the Auckland High Court during November 1998 revealed that Highway 61 were involved with the national distribution of locally made narcotics, which netted an Auckland quartet “bags of cash for high living” (*NZ Herald*, 11 Nov. 1998; *Press*, 11 Nov. 1998). An industrial chemist, William John Wallace, his wife and two male counterparts admitted to varying offences related to the manufacture, possession, and supply of methamphetamine, and money laundering. During the trial it was stated that they engaged Highway 61 to distribute the drugs from what is claimed to be the biggest drug-making operation in New Zealand’s history. When the police raided secret laboratories in Auckland suburbs they found \$217,000 in cash, 3.4 kilograms of methamphetamine and enough chemicals to produce another 74 kilograms of the drug; enough to net some \$5.2 million. The distribution of which would contribute significant funding towards the gang’s coffers and enhance their standing in this arena, although, the police closely monitor and hinder the activities of this gang. Prior to the above mentioned court hearing police, tax agents and customs official raided 21 properties in co-ordinated dawn raids against the Auckland Highway 61 in October 1998. During these raids some 20 gang members and associates were arrested, with several on drug-related charges (*NZ Herald*, 23 Oct. 1998; *Press*, 23 Oct. 1998).

Their association with Bandidos Motor Cycle World gang, also known as The Fat Mexicans, has strengthened Highway 61’s position within this criminal sphere. The Bandidos originated in Texas in 1966 and have expanded worldwide to have some 67 chapters by 1998, with approximately 600 members (Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, 1998). This association was believed to have begun during 1994 when New Zealand Highway 61 linked up with Bandidos MC Australia and were reported to be buying into a franchise type arrangement. Such an agreement would link the New Zealand chapters more deeply with their international counterparts to provide members with a wider range of resources and ‘expertise’ to draw upon (Andrae, 1998, p.60; *Dominion*, 24 June 1996; Neale 1998; Newbold, 1997, p.1). Obviously, the police are perturbed by such developments.

The police also have equally disturbing concerns about the activities of other gangs in New Zealand. Members of other gangs have been involved in a wide range of criminal activity; the manufacturing and distribution of drugs, murder, manslaughter and other forms of violence

from assaults, coercion and threats to witness intimidation, aggravated robberies and burglaries, car theft and numerous other property offences. In 1997, for example, it was reported that North Island Black Power members “had been involved in three killings and 30 armed robberies” (Taylor, 1997, p.A:5) in the Taranaki region alone since 1988. In November that year a Mongrel Mob member was killed and three Black Power members were convicted of manslaughter for their role in this shooting. Most of these activities involved varying degrees of organisation and planning.

In March 1998, Black Power’s expansion of its drug-dealing activities in Highway 61’s area prompted major concerns for the Christchurch police. After three Black Power members were seriously injured in a confrontation, police feared violent retributions would take place and Operation Comalco was initiated. Police surveillance of Black Power established that three smaller drug-dealing syndicates were operating and that the drugs were being distributed through more than twelve houses. The practice was really well structured and co-ordinated. It was also discovered that these syndicates sold drugs to anybody including school-aged children and that a daily turnover between \$3000 and \$5000 had been secured (*Press*, 23 March 1998; *Press*, 28 July 1998).

North Island Black Power members demonstrated not only their ability to organise and carry out criminal activity but also the extent that they would go to conceal their crimes through the murder of Christopher Crean on 7 October 1996. Crean, having witnessed a violent attack by Black Power members on a Mongrel Mob member, presented evidence against Black Power members in the subsequent depositions hearing. This resulted in threats made by Black power members against Crean’s life. Placing his faith in God, he refused offers of police protection and this left the way clear for four Black Power members to eliminate him. He was silenced forever with a shotgun blast through the glass front door of his house, which killed Crean around 10pm that Sunday night while his wife and children were in the house (Taylor, 1997, p.A:5).

This killing led to much emotionally laden debate over witness anonymity and highlighted the dangers that some prosecution witnesses can be exposed to (Dunbar, 1997, p.C:4.). Around that time, 1996-97, there were several gang-related prosecutions that had been hindered because witnesses were too afraid to testify and this had become an exasperating problem for

the police. To compound matters the police reported that some of the gangs were forging alliances with the Asian crime syndicates.

The Mongrel Mob, being more visible in terms of media coverage, and portrayed as the most violent of all the gangs (TVNZ, 1999, *60 Minutes*, screened July 4.) also has been involved in highly profiled, violent offences including organised aggravated robberies and murder. In 1996 the police alleged that Mongrel Mob members had been offered \$140,000 by Triad connections to kill Detective Sergeant Api Fiso, a senior member of the Asian Crime Unit. Although the death threat allegations were strongly denied, associations between a Wellington businessman, Ricky Yan and Mongrel Mob members were confirmed. Yan was reported to have had strong Triad connections, but he vehemently denied the allegations of affiliations with the K14 Triads. He did acknowledge, however, that his foster son's father was a member of this group (*Dominion*, 19 July 1996; Kirk, 1996, p.19; Newbold, 1997, p.83).

Police intelligence indicates that several gangs have had some link with Asian crime syndicates. The implication of this along with the globalisation of the outlaw motorcycle gangs seems daunting in terms of the knowledge skill and tactics that New Zealand gang members can gain from the well-preserved international organised crime networks (Newbold, 1997, p.83).

Understanding Asian Crime and the Asian Youth Gangs.

While a limited number of immigrants from Asia have been a part of New Zealand's cultural landscape since the 1860s, Asian crime, during the 1960s through to the 1980s, was not considered to be a major threat. And the Asian population remained relatively small until 1986. In recent years, however, the Asian population has increased significantly from 20,000 in 1986 to 81,000 in 1996. This increase has been influenced by changes in New Zealand's immigration policies, in particular the 'Business Investment Policy' of 1987 which has enabled Chinese, Malaysian and Taiwanese migrants with investment capital and entrepreneurial skills to enter New Zealand more freely (Newbold, 1997, pp.83-84).

Some of these migrants, as well as those from other countries are believed to be continuing their links with organised crime groups in their country of origin, which worries the police and politicians. Since 1989, when four Asian men and a Fijian with New Zealand citizenship

were charged in relation to smuggling two kilograms of 80 per cent pure heroin, valued at \$16 million, into New Zealand, periodic media reports have emphasised the issue of Asian crime. Furthermore, the media presented some of these cases as evidence of Triads operating here (Gadd, 1990, p.9; Grainger, 1989, p.3). But the true extent of Triad and other Asian crime syndicates' operations in New Zealand remain relatively unclear.

Triad history can be traced back to the time of Christ, although this has been clouded by legend and folklore. But by the 17th century Triads had become one of the most powerful international crime networks in the world. In 1947 Hong Kong was recognised as the crux of all Triad activity and this enabled Triad influence to permeate Chinese communities worldwide (Booth, 1991, pp. Vii, 2, 40, & 107-132). As major players in international crime, Triads and other organised Asian crime groups are involved in extortion, drug trafficking, illegal gambling and forgery, among other criminal endeavours. Alongside these, Asian organised crime networks are associated with prostitution and other illegal activity within the sex industry. These ventures are often supported by legitimate business enterprises including massage parlours, escort agencies, restaurants, legal gambling establishments and travel agencies (ibid, pp.94-106). By all accounts, Triad activity in New Zealand remains in its infancy, and is following infiltration patterns that have been observed in other countries. Traditionally, Triads tend to work their own communities, knowing that their own people rarely complain to the police. As Detective Sergeant Api Fiso of the Asian Crime Unit, explains, "The word (Triad) can strike fear into the hearts of many Asian people" (cited in O'Hanlon, 1998b, p.2).

This helps Triad members maintain a low profile until they attempt to expand their operations within the wider social context (Newbold, 1997, p.87; O'Hanlon, 1998b, p.2; Roberts, 1991, p.24). Triad groups known in New Zealand include the 14K Triad group, the San Yee On and the Wo group, although much speculation exists around their membership and role within the criminal sphere (Moore, 1997, p.4; Newbold, 1997, p.85). For the average New Zealander, the word Triad is often associated with any facet of Asian crime, organised or otherwise and there is a tendency to link all crime committed by Asians to Triad groups.

While other Asian criminal networks, Malaysian, Vietnamese and so on, are known to operate in New Zealand, concern has been mooted from the mid 1990s about the possible connection between Triad groups and the newer Asian youth gangs (O'Hanlon, 1998b, p.2). These gang

members, notably in Auckland, are not driven by underclass deprivation; they have cellphones and fast cars, and are extremely mobile. They come from wealthy Asian families and the youth themselves often have substantial allowances; one youth under police attention was reported as "getting an allowance of \$4000 per week" (Matthews, 1996, p.26). One explanation for the rise in this type of gang is that these youth are isolated and alienated within New Zealand's culture, which is often racist in its underpinnings. As a result these youth tend to group together for support and companionship.

Over time these gangs have become increasingly territorial and their involvement in violent crime has been noticed. Examples include, a drive-by shooting, a fight between about forty Hong Kong and Vietnamese youth where police seized an assortment of weapons, and a fight between Thai and Vietnamese groups where a youth was left with his fingers chopped off (ibid.). In August 1998, a South Auckland restaurateur had his premises smashed up by a group of about ten Asian youths. These youth groups sometimes give the impression that they were connected to, or have approval from a Triad group (Matthews, 1996, p.26; *Press*, 27 Aug. 1998). With similar incidents have been reported elsewhere, much apprehension and uneasiness exists about these developments. And, as previously noted, this activity compounds the concerns that police have about liaisons between New Zealand's well-established homegrown gangs and the Asian crime networks.

As a result the police have moved to develop a closer relationship with Asian communities both as an attempt to gain a better understanding of Asian crime and to support members of those communities to stand against crime. Part of this strategy has been to co-publish a booklet, *Guide to Crime Prevention for Asian Communities*, which was written in Chinese and of which 10,000 copies were distributed (Doone, 1998, p.4.). The recruitment of bilingual Asian officers into the police force has helped in this regard, providing a base for effective training and discussion to take place. New Zealand Police have been sent to international conferences that enable them to keep up with international happenings and research. The Asian Crime Unit has become central in this process allowing for the collection and coordination of data, from which, strategies for dealing with Asian crime can eventuate.

Crackdown on Gangs and Organised Crime.

Organised crime in New Zealand and the activities of gangs have received unprecedented attention in recent years. Police and politicians have sought greater powers to curb gang developments and incidents of organised crime. New 'tough anti-gang laws' have been pushed through parliament as an attempt to curb both gang membership and the gangs' continuing criminal enterprise. These include the Summary Offences Amendment Act 1997 that brought in two new association-type offences, and extended Police powers in relation to the interception of personal communication and the stopping and searching of motor vehicles. The Evidence [Witness Anonymity] Amendment Act and the Harassment Act 1997, which came into effect in January 1998 were aimed at providing an element of protection against witness intimidation. Similarly, non-association orders introduced in 1989 and mainly used in response to domestic disputes under section 28A of the Criminal Justice Act have been extended under the Criminal Justice Amendment Act (No.2) 1998 to stop gang members from associating. These non-association orders have been employed to limit the activities of members of the Road Knights. Police reports suggest that the gang's power base has been almost crippled through these orders. Although, Police acknowledge, "it would be foolish to suggest [that this has] stopped them seeing each other behind closed doors" (Detective Senior Sergeant Peter Read cited in Van Beynen, 1999, p.6).

Alongside these laws gang property and gang members' personal property has been confiscated under the Proceeds of Crime Act. In early 1998 a fortified gang house in Christchurch was confiscated and as of May 1998 the Proceeds of Crime Unit was awaiting the outcome of applications for the confiscation of five more houses and a number of Harley Davidson motorcycles. In addition, a number of strategies for dealing with gangs have been implemented by police and various city councils throughout country where court orders have been sought for the removal of, or modification to, fortifications surrounding gang property. Amendments to the Local Government Act broadened the grounds on which the removal of gang fortifications can be sought provided the court is satisfied that the fence facilitates or contributes to the concealment of criminal activity (Local Government New Zealand, 1997, pp.13-15; Justice & Law Reform Committee, 1997, pp.2-9, & 81-100; *Press*, 5 Oct. 1998; *Ten-One*, 1998, Aug.7, p.1; *Ten-One*, 1997, August 1, p.4; *Ten-One*, 1998, May 15, p.15; *Ten-One*, 1999, March 12, p.3; *Ten-One*, 1999, Dec.19, pp.1-2, & 11-18).

These laws have not eventuated without criticism. Submissions made on the Harassment and Criminal Associations Bill suggested that a number of individual rights and liberties were at risk (Justice & Law Reform Committee, 1997, p.4). Changes to the Evidence Act are claimed to breach the principles of a fair trial that are an important aspect of justice in our democratic society. Defence lawyer, Peter Williams QC, has claimed that this is “sacrilegious” (cited in Dunbar, 1997, p.C:4), while civil libertarians argue that there are no assurances that the secret witness process would not be expanded to encompass a wider field of court cases. Criminologist Dr. John Pratt and historian Mr Graeme Dunstall have expressed concerns about the lack of debate around the law changes and noted that little attention has been given to civil liberties. But Dunstall says:

Unless someone’s particular interests are affected, they [New Zealanders] won’t jump up and down on these issues. There’s a climate of fear and intolerance, and people just don’t think about civil liberties – they think: ‘It won’t apply to us’.
(cited in Dunbar, 1997, p.C:4)

Whether these new laws work to curtail gang membership and gang activity on a long-term basis or not remains to be seen. The lack of independent or adequate research on the nature of the gangs, gang-related criminal activity and organised crime in New Zealand indicates that these measures merely “complement the armoury of general law enforcement powers... which are already available to the Police to combat offending” (Justice & Law Reform Committee, 1997, p.3.). In the meantime, the police clampdown on gangs continues and further resources will no doubt be sought to keep them under control while the broader underlying contextual issues related to gang membership, such as violence within families, lack of education, racism and long-term unemployment, remain unaddressed.

APPENDIX III:

University of Canterbury
Department of Sociology

Women's Reality of Gang Life in New Zealand.

You have been invited to take part in a research project titled *Women's Reality of Gang Life in New Zealand*. The prime objective of this research is to explore the processes involved for women associated with gangs when moving in and / or out of gang life. It is hoped this exploration of the role and reality of gang life for women in New Zealand will provide the understandings necessary to provide the base from which suitable supports and network systems can be established to assist women who wish to leave gang life behind.

I am interested in discussing with you the direction and aims of this project to ensure the needs of women who seek to leave gang life are uncovered. I would like to meet with you so you can share your knowledge and experiences with me sometime between April - June 1998. I anticipate interviews will take up to two hours, however, this may vary from person to person.

Having left gang life behind myself and having worked in the area of violence for a number of years I have an understanding of the safety concerns that you may have around your involvement in this research project. For this reason I wish to discuss with you your personal safety concerns and needs prior to the interviews or discussions so I can work with you to keep you safe. Your identity will not be revealed and no written material will identify the link you have / have had to a particular gang. Records of your name and contact information will be stored separately from the information that you provide me and once you choose an assumed name for the purposes of this research your real names will be deleted from my file.

I understand that this research project may be focusing on a sensitive area of your life, which may raise a number of feelings, such as; sadness, anger, frustration or fear, and I will be sensitive to your needs. Should you wish not to talk about a certain aspect I will respect your right to decline from answering my queries or to withdraw from the project at anytime. Anything that you tell me that you do not wish to be included in my study will be excluded.

This research project is being supervised by the Department of Sociology at the University of Canterbury and you may contact my supervisors through the Department if the need arise. This project has also gained the approval of the

University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee. If you have any queries you can contact me at home Tues, Thurs and Friday after 8pm, phone xx xxxxxxxx or write to :

Glennis Dennehy
C/o Department of Sociology
University of Canterbury
PO Box 4800
Christchurch.

APPENDIX IV:

Women's Reality of Gang Life in New Zealand.

Interview Guide.

- * Age, employment status, highest educational attainment, income level, marital status and number of children.
- * Family background.
- * Ethnicity.
- * What attracted the subject towards gang life or to a particular gang member? How did they become involved? How long were they involved?
- * An exploration of how the subject experienced becoming involved and accepted within the gang network.
- * An exploration of how the subject accepted gang activities, structures and belief systems, drawing particular attention to those activities that are deemed deviant or criminal within the wider community. What processes occurred that fostered / supported this acceptance? How was any resistance minimised?
- * Discussion about the reality of gang life for women.
 - Role of women within the gang system.
 - Issues of violence.
 - Power relationships.
 - Positive experiences.
 - Negative experiences.
- * Discussion about the subjects decision to leave.
 - The decision to leave.
 - The pros and cons of leaving the gang / gang member.
 - The process of leaving.
- * A discussion on life after gang involvement.
- * Anything else the subject wishes to discuss or feels is relevant.

APPENDIX V:**Women's Reality of Gang Life in New Zealand.****Participant Consent Form.**

I, (*name*) have been fully informed about the aims and objectives of the above named study and have understood the written information provided. My personal safety concerns have been discussed and accounted for. It is on this basis, with the understanding that my personal details will remain anonymous, that I agree to take part in this study and consent to the publication of succeeding written reports. I am aware that I can withdraw my involvement at any given stage and have the information provided by me returned upon request.

Signed

Date

APPENDIX VI:

TRAUMAGENIC DYNAMICS IN THE IMPACT OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.

Taken from: Finkelhor, D., 1988. 'The Trauma of Child Sexual Abuse: Two Models' in The Lasting Effects of Child Sexual Abuse. Eds. Wyatt, G., & Powell, G. Newbury Park: SAGE Publications. pp. 73-74.

Traumagenic Dynamics in the Impact of Child Sexual Abuse

I. Traumatic Sexualization

Dynamics

- Child rewarded for sexual behavior inappropriate to developmental level.
- Offender exchanges attention and affection for sex.
- Sexual parts of child fetishized.
- Offender transmits misconception about sexual behavior and sexual morality.
- Conditioning of sexual activity with negative emotion and memories.

Psychological Impact

- Increased salience of sexual issues.
- Confusion about sexual identity.
- Confusion about sexual norms.
- Confusion of sex with love and care-getting and arousal sensations.
- Aversion to sex-intimacy.

Behavioral Manifestations

- Sexual preoccupations and compulsive sexual behaviors.
- Precocious sexual activity.
- Aggressive sexual behaviors.
- Promiscuity.
- Prostitution.
- Sexual dysfunctions: flashbacks, difficulty in arousal, orgasm.
- Avoidance of or phobic reactions to sexual intimacy.

II. Stigmatization

Dynamics

- Offender blames, denigrates victim.
- Offender and others pressure child for secrecy.
- Child infers attitudes of shame about activities.
- Others have shocked reaction to disclosure.
- Others blame child for events.
- Victim is stereotyped as damaged goods.

Psychological Impact

- Guilt, Shame.
- Lowered self-esteem.
- Sense of differentness from others.

Behavioral Manifestations

- Isolation.
- Drug or alcohol abuse.
- Criminal involvement.
- Self-mutilation.
- Suicide.

III. Betrayal

Dynamics

- Trust and vulnerability manipulated.
- Violation of expectation that others will provide care and protection.

Child's well-being disregarded.

Lack of support and protection from parent(s).

Psychological Impact

- Grief, depression.
- Extreme dependency.
- Impaired ability to judge trustworthiness of others.
- Mistrust; particularly of men.
- Anger, hostility.

Behavioral Manifestations

- Clinging.
- Vulnerability to subsequent abuse and exploitation.
- Allowing own children to be victimized.
- Isolation.
- Discomfort in intimate relationships.
- Marital problems.
- Aggressive behavior.
- Delinquency.

IV. Powerlessness

Dynamics

- Body territory invaded against the child's wishes.
- Vulnerability to invasion continues over time.
- Offender uses force or trickery to involve child.
- Child feels unable to protect self and halt abuse.
- Repeated experience of fear.
- Child is unable to make others believe.

Psychological Impact

- Anxiety, fear.
- Lowered sense of efficacy.
- Perception of self as victim.
- Need to control.
- Identification with the aggressor.

Behavioral Manifestations

- Nightmares.
- Phobias.
- Somatic complaints; eating and sleeping disorders.
- Depression.
- Disassociation.
- Running away.
- School problems, truancy.
- Employment problems.
- Vulnerability to subsequent victimization.
- Aggressive behavior, bullying.
- Delinquency.
- Becoming an abuser.

APPENDIX VII:

**APPLICATIONS UNDER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT:
JULY 1996-APRIL 1999.**

Table showing the number of applications under the Domestic Violence Act for the period July 1996 - April 1999.

(Source: Department for Courts, Handout given at the Family Violence Task Force Conference, 1998)



Applications under Domestic Violence Act

Period July 1996 to April 1999

Total to date since commencement of Act	21095
July 1996 to June 1997	7911
July 1997 to June 1998	7213
YTD July 1998 to April 1999	5971

% On Notice applications since commencement of Act	16.3%
July 1996 to June 1997	14.3%
July 1997 to June 1998	16.4%
YTD July 1998 to April 1999	18.7%

Average per month since commencement of Act	620
July 1996 to June 1997	659
July 1997 to June 1998	601
YTD July 1998 to April 1999	597

Ethnicity of applicants and respondents since commencement of Act		
Ethnicity	Respondent	Applicant
NZ Pakeha	48.0%	52.3%
NZ Maori	24.2%	23.3%
Pacific Islander	8.1%	5.9%
Asian	1.6%	1.7%
Other	5.3%	4.2%
Unknown / Incomplete data	12.8%	12.6%

Number of children since commencement of Act			
	Under 5 years	Over 5 years	Total
July 1996 to June 1997	5420	6682	12102
July 1997 to June 1998	5006	6087	11093
YTD July 1998 to April 1999	3875	5149	9024

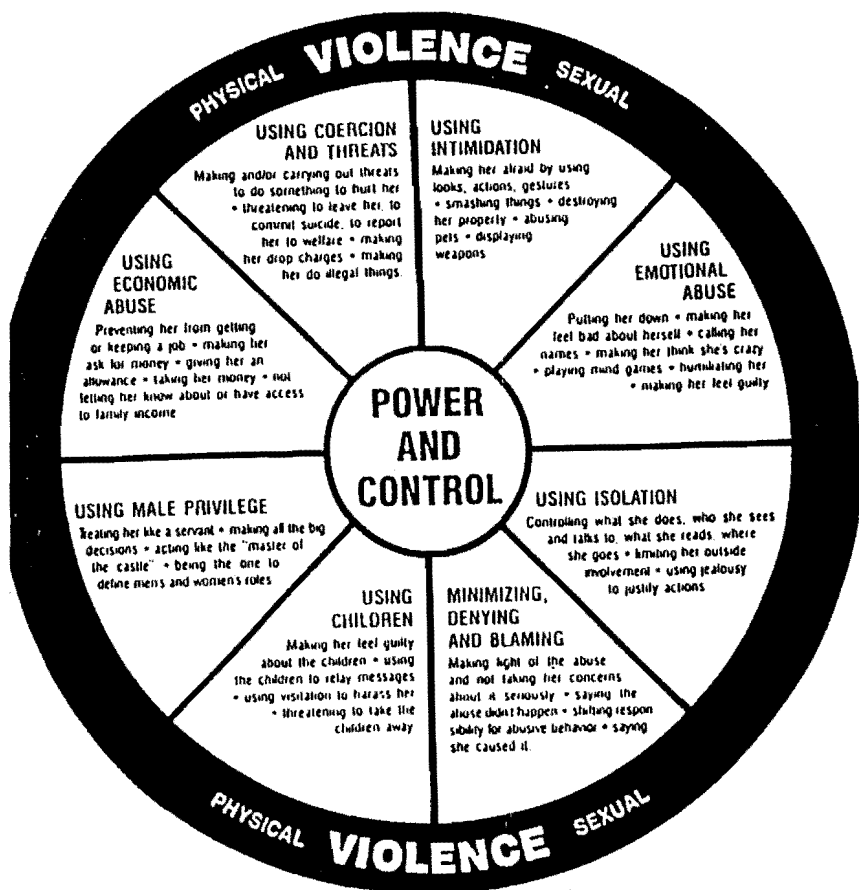
Gender of respondents since commencement of Act	
Male	91.6%
Female	8.4%

Nature of relationship since commencement of Act	
	Relationship
Partner	47.8%
Married	34.6%
Family Member	7.5%
Close Personal Relationship	8.3%
Ordinarily Shares Household	0.8%
Unknown / Incomplete	1.0%

SUMMARY OF DAIP POWER AND CONTROL MODEL.

(Source: Barnes, 1993, pp.2-9)

FIGURE 1



2. DEFINITIONS - WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE? WHY IS IT SO COMMON?

Domestic violence and violence generally within our society is highly controversial - most people have strong opinions and feelings about it.

To come to some understanding of domestic violence, it is useful to look wider at violence per se, then focus more specifically on domestic violence.

Violence can occur in many forms and on vastly different scales - a kick under the kitchen table, a brawl in a hotel, or an act of nature such as a major earthquake. For this analysis we are only considering violence perpetrated by humans against others.

Domestic violence within a family, is one example of that. Other examples include religious crusades, world wars, colonisation, lynchings, burglaries, the Nazi holocaust, and other examples of "ethnic cleansing", gay bashings, so called "random acts of violence".

All have in common two things:

1. A belief that an individual or group have the right to use violence.
2. An intention that by using violence they will achieve the results they seek.

Domestic violence or family violence takes that belief, intention, and action into our homes. Often the word "domestic" when applied to violence is used to down play or even trivialise the violence - "it's just a domestic". Therefore the phrase "family violence" perhaps more accurately acknowledges the gross breach of trust incurred when violence is between family members. The word "family" needs a broad definition here, as it must include a range of living situations that go beyond the mythical nuclear family of "Mum Dad and the kids" of '60's Television sitcoms. This is especially important to consider if we cross cultural boundaries and take account of the rapid social change of the last thirty years.

Overwhelmingly in our patriarchal society, domestic violence is also more accurately described as "mens violence against women". This is not to say that women are not ever violent. But in the light of all research and experience of those working in the field, mens violence against women is pervasive and entrenched within our culture. Estimates of the percentage of male responsibility for domestic violence are around 95%.

This raises gender issues of power that go well beyond individuals and families - in Section 3, four contexts of power and its link to hierarchical patriarchal structures in our culture are examined.

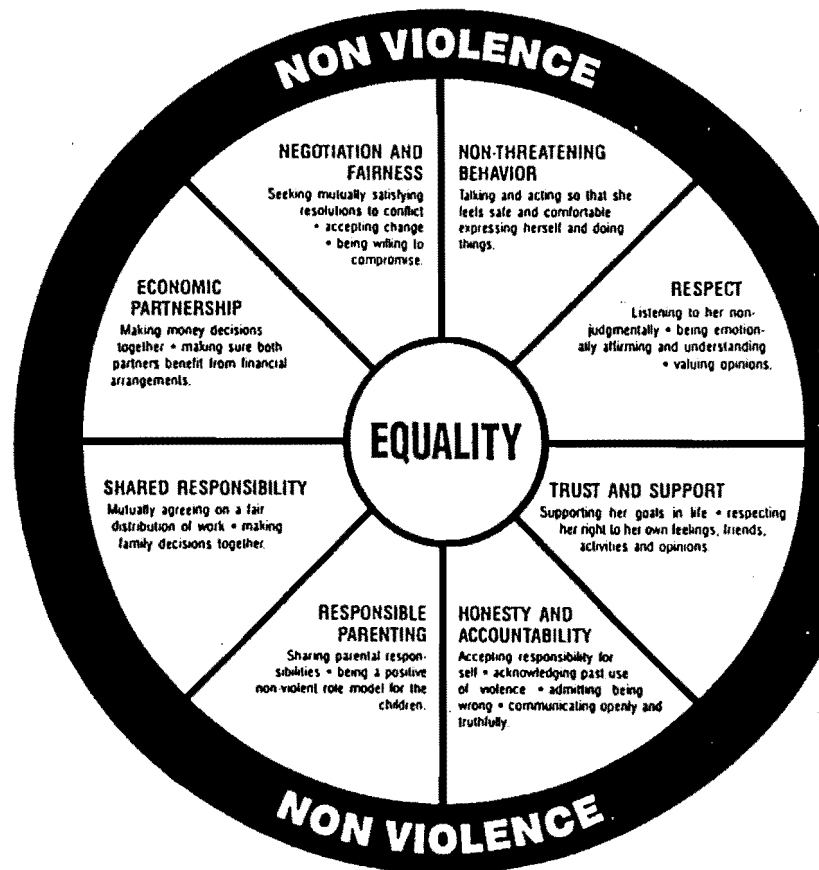
When inducting assailants into the Men's Education Programme at the Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project, group members are asked to consider the following reasons for their violence.

1. To make someone do something.
2. To stop someone doing something.
3. To punish someone for something they did or didn't do.

Overwhelmingly, this simple explanation is accepted as a useful starting point for understanding violent behaviour.

It also sidesteps a plethora of psychological theories about violence that often mask the fundamental issue of power and control within relationships.

FIGURE 2



The "Power and Control Wheel" (figure 1) is then introduced to the group. It identifies the most common tactics men use to gain control over their women partners.

As these tactics are explored by the men in detail, they are invited to identify their own patterns of abuse, and to see violence in a broader sense than just physical abuse.

It is clear to most men on the programme that violence as a short term tactic of control is highly effective. It is also destroying the very relationship they are seeking. Paradoxically, when asked to describe their ideal relationship, the same men will spontaneously start to advocate for a non violent equal power relationship. This is invariably similar to the qualities outlined in the "Equality Wheel" appendix 3.

It then becomes every man's own personal responsibility to:

1. Identify his beliefs and actions that are destructive and violent.
2. Make decisions about personal change or face the consequences of further violence - criminal sanctions, and the destruction of their relationships.

The programme does not focus on anger or personal pathologies such as dysfunctional family backgrounds. It focuses instead on understanding domestic violence in an analysis of power. Power and its abuse, is the recurrent underlying theme of this booklet.

2.1 The Power and Control Model in its Individual Context

This wheel describes the tactics most commonly used by men against women in a relationship. Although viewed separately for clarity, the day to day reality is that these tactics are used in combination, reflecting the belief of men that they can use these tactics as and when necessary to get the required results. The outer ring, which includes physical and sexual violence, acts as a back up to these tactics if they are not effective. Many men need never use those more detectable tactics, because they have already achieved what they want. Also, most abusive men have a pattern of abuse that their partners, for their own survival, learn to read and anticipate. This pattern of abuse is often innocuous in its early stages, and undetectable by other people. This gives abusers power in a range of social settings - little cues and signals that are sending a special message to their target. Especially when violence has occurred, sometimes only once, these small cues are sufficient to send a very powerful message. Many men are seldom violent, but are able to use that rare time as an overwhelming reinforcer. Therefore a raised eyebrow, a quick rub of the left ear, can remind someone to behave themselves or else.

A brief comment on the tactics on the wheel.

2.1.1 Male Privilege

This segment underpins all other segments in that it reflects the implied permission men receive to assume control. Much as we may try and bring up our sons in a non sexist way, male privilege is in the air. "New men" will state quite sincerely that they want equal relationships with women. However unless the male privilege built into society is addressed, men drift into expecting to have the final say, having more air time, and to be looked after by women. In the same way, women are socialised to accept that men are in control - many women actively promote that from the security they may feel from a subservient position. This may never impact on a women's life until her bossy husband dies in his 60's and she is faced with a life she is not in control of because she cannot drive, manage her money or do a whole range of things her husband did. She may then

be vulnerable to that gap in her life being filled by another man, who may be abusive.

Equally, men whose women leave them are often in a rush to fill that gap as the dishes mount up and the socks get lost. All those little details we call "women's work".

2.1.2 Economic Abuse

Many men are threatened by women partners who earn more than them, and decisions about where their families live are often based around Dad's work.

Some men avoid responsibility by expecting their partners to manage the family money, receiving only an allowance for their personal expenses. However the major decisions are usually his, and she pays dearly for any slip up.

Often a major reason women stay in abusive relationships is because the financial cost of leaving is very high. This is especially common when women think of lost opportunities for their children if they separate, and have only the uncertain prospect of the DPB.

2.1.3 Coercion and Threats

"If you leave, I'll track you down and kill you, then kill myself". "Boy I can sure understand how that guy Ratima felt". Tactics such as these are very effective to keep women in their place. Guilt trips, portraying yourself as a victim devoid of hope, or "my life is nothing without you - come back - I have nothing to live for now".

Often women become enmeshed in their partners wheeling and dealings with fraud, crime and drugs. They are then unsure of whether they will go to jail should they separate and the truth gets out. It's simpler to stay put and live with the predictable known fear.

2.1.4 Intimidation

Some men like to clean their gun collection just before or after a little discussion with their partners. It helps women to understand their point of view. Tall men can use their height and stand close to better explain an important point. Other men enjoy throwing cups or breakable treasures across the room to their partners when they're not expecting it. It keeps them on their toes. Some men "accidentally" damage things precious to their partners. All these tactics are useful reminders of whose in charge.

By keeping your partner always on her back foot in a defensive role, you can make sure that your plans proceed better.

2.1.5 Emotional Abuse

One of the most common forms of abuse - a lot of creative energy is used to make someone else feel lousy.

Emotional abuse - name calling, put downs are more effective if linked to the victims sexuality. The most powerful swearwords are all sexual in nature. By using these put downs we attack peoples very essence of being. Also, by turning people into objects, it is then easier to use physical or sexual violence against them. We are dehumanising those closest to us, using a tactic of war. By consistently doing this we can emotionally cripple someone, destroying their self esteem and integrity.

There are many subtle psychological games that can be used over a long period of time to convince someone they are either dumb, crazy or both. Also when you know someone intimately you know the area of their life they are most vulnerable. By targeting that, we can gain an amazing measure of control over that person. The scars of emotional abuse are often the longest lasting, and the slowest to heal.

2.1.6 Isolation

These tactics are all designed to keep the woman's life focused on the needs and beliefs of her man. Jealousy is usually an aspect of possession and it assumes there is a scarcity of love and attention. So if a woman gives attention to other people, her partner may put them down, being rude or intimidating when those people are around and then keep her to himself. The more he keeps her from external social support, the more dependent she becomes on him.

If a woman is moved away from her network of support, she will be far less likely or able to leave him.

2.1.7 Minimising Denying and Blaming

History rewritten from the perspective of the side that won. If he chooses to not acknowledge the full effects of his abuse, it is easier for him to convince himself that he's a nice guy really. It also makes "other people" the ones who have to change. Very few people who use tactics of power and control are willing to look honestly at the effects of that behaviour, without in some way playing it down. By directing the critical focus on others, we can avoid any responsibility.

Like male privilege, the tactics in this segment underly all the other tactics. Often substance abusers will use "I was drunk at the time" "I don't remember" as a way of avoiding their responsibility. Humour is often a tactic used to trivialise and victims are portrayed as over serious, "can't take a joke" or "party poopers". The effect of minimising denying and blaming on victims is to leave them doubting their own experience. They may be left feeling confused, stupid or embarrassed because they want to believe it never happened.

2.1.8 Using Children

"So what's your crazy mother up to now?" If children get caught up in adult fights it is confusing and creates major insecurity when they feel they must choose between Mum or Dad's version of reality.

Also many men will challenge custody through the courts not because they want to be the primary parent, but because they want to punish her by taking the children away. Access time is often a sham where he uses his visitation rights to harass her and criticise her parenting. By showering expensive gifts on the children, he undermines her and turns the children against her, even though she is the primary carer.

Even though the relationship was over years ago, men are able to keep abuse going for years through their manipulation of the children against their mother - violence through remote control.

2.1.9 Summary of Power and Control Wheel

By encouraging men to identify their own tactics of control, the next question could be "So what sort of relationship are you creating?". It is also useful to ask "What sort of relationship do you want?". Few men actively want a partner who lives in fear of them, who lies and sneaks around just to survive. Most men want a relationship that has love, trust, intimacy, communication, closeness - the

Equality wheel outlines many of the attributes of a non violent, loving relationship. Many men may say "But she uses these power and control tactics too". By focusing on mens violence, it is not to say that women do not use tactics of power and control. However change most usefully starts with the most powerful person owning up to the extent of their problem. They then create a climate where others too can own their own abuse. We must not forget that few men live in fear of their women partners. The basic power difference between the sexes, reinforced on every level of society, must be addressed before trust building is possible.

The message to men is "No one else needs to change for you to be non violent. In the end, the only person we can truly control is ourselves".

2.2 Power and Control In the Family

When men in a family get together, the conversations tend to be about sports cars, home renovations, competition - virtually anything but real conversations about relationships. When women get together, mostly the conversations are relationship focused. Women often practice and develop their relationship skills and understandings on a daily basis.

By avoiding these topics, men also choose not to learn about how to be better partners, better fathers, uncles or grandparents. Men also entrench into controlling behaviour through their sense of humour which is often competitive and based on put downs, and prefer to paint themselves as victims by minimising denying and blaming others for their actions. Men tend to have underdeveloped sense of responsibility. To balance this, women often overdevelop their responsibility and blame themselves for his behaviour.

Once the initial rush of romance of a new relationship is over, women see men voting with their feet to put male company, male interests first, and we hear comments like "We don't talk any more". Men stop listening as women raise these issues - it gets called nagging. Nagging is what people do when they're not heard, men blame women for nagging often. It is often only in a crisis that men will respond or listen.

Also wider family pressures on women to stay in an abusive relationship are based on the need to avoid the shame of a broken relationship. Beliefs that children need both parents, even when one is abusive, override womens basic rights to safety. So families will minimise or deny the violence in the interests of keeping the family together.

2.3 Power and Control Model In the Community Context

The hierarchical structure of almost all community organisations and business structures reinforce beliefs that dominance by a few of many is the nonnal natural order of things. Everywhere we see people organised into pyramid shaped institutions and controlled by those with the power to say how things should be. As we move to a more de-regulated business model there is less accountability for bosses, and those with less power are considered ungrateful if they question the rights of others to control their destiny.

As unemployment rises, the victims of the fortunate few are blamed for their own lack of opportunity. Poor people are objectified as dole bludgers, lazy, a constant drain on our welfare system.

White collar crime, although in dollar terms far more widespread is down-played, whilst we crack down harder on visible blue collar crime.

This is considered "normal" in our society.

The message behind all this explicitly and implicitly, is that winners are competitive, individualistic, prepared to use any tactic to reach the top of their field. In a winner/loser system, success for a few is only possible because so many people are failing. These short sighted, dehumanising tactics are reflected in our families. Men in particular, seek power and symbols of power to gain a sense of success. Women too who wish to succeed in this plan, are increasingly expected to operate in competitive, dominant ways.

It is not surprising then that domestic violence is reflecting the dominant values in our community. Overwhelmingly those in society who work to support the failures in the win loose system, are women. Overwhelmingly the work of women in our society is taken for granted, unpaid and unvalued. Volunteer work in the community tends not to make you rich or powerful.

2.4 Power and Control Model In Society

Those with the most power in our society are least likely to want to change it. Powerful people who have done well vote to retain a system that has let them have their way.

In the same way, men who use violence to control their family are least likely to want to change, are least likely to want to look to themselves as the one with the problem. If we want to stop domestic violence, we must hold abusers accountable through our laws, our policies and our procedures. However the people who make those laws, those who influence government policy, are often the ones with the least interest in changing laws.

It is not surprising that we have gross inequalities in our society when many of those in power choose to be blind to any power analysis.

Domestic violence or mens violence against women, is symptomatic of patriarchal hierarchical systems designed by men for men.

These uncomfortable revelations leave many men fearing that any addressing of inequality will simply lead to an inversion of the power pyramid. Hence we ridicule and objectify feminists, so called radicals out to destroy the family unit. By taking this attitude, we show an inability to move out of a win/lose paradigm that is actually destroying our own intimacy with women. By moving into a co-operative equal power model that addresses equity, we do loose our "power over" others. What we gain is a real connection only possible through trust and equality.

APPENDIX IX:

CHART SHOWING POWER & CONTROL TACTICS IN RELATION TO OTHER FORMS OF OPPRESSION.

(Source: Barnes, 1993, p. 100)

SEXISM - HOW IT RELATES TO OTHER OPPRESSION

	Women - Sexism	Non Whites - Racism	Old People - Agism also Children & Disabled	Gays & Lesbians Homo phobia	Non Christians	Poor People - Classism	Deaf People
Isolation	Need a man for protection women out alone are "asking for it". Kept at home with young children. Living away from other support eg whanau not listened to by man.	Lack of Police response to minority groups. Native languages not valued. Poor access to telephone and transport. Live away from family support to get jobs. No interpretation services.	Lack of transport access cost of health care reduces independence poor building design for disabled. Old peoples homes may lack stimulation. Children left alone so parents can work. High rises become ghettos. Fear of violence keeps people inside.	Forced to stay closeted. Some neighbourhoods unsafe. Withdrawal of family support. Lack of forums to discuss life issues.	Different beliefs not understood or tolerated. Language barriers.	Poor access to transport and communication. Institutional language too jargonised.	Language barrier - NZ sign language not recognised as true language of deaf people. Poor access to social services. Social settings don't cater to deaf people.
Emotional Abuse	Put down for appearance, objectified. "Blonde Bimbo" jokes.	Racist names and jokes. called lazy, culture ridiculed or trivialised.	Ignored, patronised, trivialised. Talked about while present as though they aren't in the room. Children put down - called dumb, naughty, no good.	Viewed as perverts, weirdos or child abusers. Called names, trivialised blamed for AIDS and social breakdown.	Jokes about religions. Stereotypes.	Blamed for own poverty. Called dole bludgers, DPB, np off allegations.	Laughed at and ridiculed considered "Deaf and dumb"
Economic Abuse	Low paid jobs - men threatened by women bosses "should stay at home". No money of their own - husbands control family money.	Low paid jobs. Land taken by government. Cross culture skills not valued.	Old people vulnerable to white collar crime - fraud and investment. Uncertainty about pensions and health care costs.	No protection from dismissal for sexual orientation. Discrimination in employment especially rights for partners.	Anti Jewish attitudes in business.	Welfare regulations make transition from benefit to work difficult. Institutions invade lives through money issues and debts.	Lack of funds for interpreters. Poor access to education and therefore employment.
Sexual Abuse	Rape, incest, marital rape. Advertising and pornography degrades women.	Racist pornography - seen as sex machines.	Fear of rape of old people living alone. Children exploited in pornography incest and adults taking advantage of childrens trust.	Accused of child molestation. Ridiculed as not being real men or women. Raped and sexually attacked. Young gays exploited.	Male attitudes abusive to Jewish girls.	Less Police protection. Youth more likely to enter prostitution.	May not know how to seek help in sexual abuse cases. Inappropriate treatment options.
Privilege of Status	Seen as subservient to men. Ignored, not listened to in important decisions. Bible used to keep women "in their place".	Assume white culture is "normal". All criteria set by white culture. Representatives chosen by whites. Concerns ignored or low priority.	Non income producing so not valued or listened to. School decisions made without student input.	Heterosexuality openly displayed but gays considered to be "haunting". Assumption that the real world is heterosexual.	Non recognition of religious ritual and holidays. Assumption of Christianity or secularism.	Middle class values taken as "normal". Most social services fronted by middle class people "understanding gap".	Ignored - issues not considered or understood. Assumed to have same needs as people who have lost their hearing. Deaf Clubs marginalised.
Threats and Intimidation	Not safe out alone. Sexual harassment.	Police brutality and lack of response.	Complaints not taken seriously. Fear of assault.	Police harassment. Taunts by drunk men. Homo phobia rarely challenged publicly.	Right wing groups and Nazis intimidate and assault.	Court system can be abusive for those who can't afford lawyers or understand system.	Deafness in public settings can cause misunderstandings. Inappropriate Police response. Hearing man marries deaf woman - he always speaks for her. Doesn't allow deaf to make decisions.
Using Children	Economic security bargained away in divorce for custody. Harassed through child access.	Less investigation needed to terminate parental rights.	Childrens needs may not be considered adequately through Family Court.	Custody of children lost through Court.	Children harassed at school.	Welfare threatens to take children to gain compliance. Childrens needs not catered to by schools.	Deafness poorly assessed, children taunted and excluded at school - called dumb. Over protective hearing parents of deaf children make inappropriate decisions for them.
Violence	Family violence - punished for disobedience by controlling men.	Genocide, lynching, overlayers, clamp downs. Harassment in mixed marriages.	"Discipline" of children. Neglect of old people.	Gay bashings and killings.	Damage places of worship.	Inappropriate or poor Police response.	Intolerance and misunderstanding can cause gross violations of human rights.

APPENDIX X:

GANG TO GOD IN ONE READING.

Media article illustrating a gang member's religious conversion and the profound lifestyle changes that followed.

(Source: *Press*, Nov. 19, 1996)

From a gang to God in one reading

WELLINGTON — When Al Taiapa was 10 years old he shot his sister in the cheek.

"I meant to shoot her in the eye. I asked her to look down the barrel to see the bullet, but she moved her head," he said.

He also hanged a brother, releasing him at the last minute.

"I left him there until his face went purple and his eyes bulged, and then I had to start hitting him. It was the excitement of it." However, the former Gisborne Mongrel Mob president says he has changed.

He is in Wellington to preach a message of love at the reopening of Elim Church in Wellington today.

He, and seven associates will tell how God changed their lives.

Mr Taiapa said he would remember March 20, 1993, as the day he became a Christian and found peace.

He had been a mob member for 15 years, and was drawn to the gang as a vehicle for the violent, sadistic streak that had ruled him from childhood.

"You've heard of Jeffrey Dahmer (an American murderer who tortured and killed 17 victims)? I was just like him. From childhood, I was fascinated with death and pain. I started on animals and went on to people.

"I used to torture animals, but it was always a private thing. I knew I'd get a damn good thrashing if I was caught."

As a six-year-old he herded sheep into a corner and bashed their heads until they staggered. He caught possums and skinned them alive to see their reactions.

"I had no sense of their pain. I took delight, of pleasure in that."

Older and enjoying the money and power a string of illegal businesses brought him as mob kingpin, Mr Taiapa was tormented by flashbacks of his evil deeds.

"I would be in my shower and start yelling and screaming, but I couldn't even tell my wife what was wrong."

One day in desperation he opened a Bible.

"I had three that people had given me over the years, but I never read them. I felt a sense of hopelessness. My whole



PHOTO: EVENING POST

Former Gisborne Mongrel Mob president Al Taiapa in Wellington's Elim Church.

life was hurting and being hurt. I would have looked at anything.

"I've read an awful lot of things. I've had the time. I spent half my life in jail."

His eyes fell on a Bible passage about the fruit of the spirit being love, peace, patience, gentleness.

"At that time it was what I wanted. I never had love in my life. God touched me." Mr Taiapa and other former gang members tour New Zealand and overseas with a healing ministry. They have been to India and Cambodia and plan return trip next year.


—NZP

APPENDIX XI:

SAMPLE OF SKINSITES FROM WHITE POWER DIRECTORY ON INTERNET.

White Power Directory

wysiwyg://7/http://ahandyguide.com/cat1/w/w398.htm



AutoConnect

Locate quality used cars by:

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Search:

Click Here to Add, Edit or Suggest a link to this Topic!

HandiLinks


Site Map

☒ No Frames ☐ Frames

- [All Society Topics in Handilinks](#) - Find all related topics to Society
- [Search Related White Power Topics in Handilinks](#) - Use the Handilinks search engine to view a sampling of related White Power Listings within the Handilinks Directory.
- [Arvan Book Center](#) -
- [Bottom of the Barrel](#) - a site for traditional skinhead and other subculture info.
- [Faq About Skinheads](#) - Frequently asked questions about skinheads. Period.
- [Gay Nazi Page](#) - Gay Nazi Links
- [Gay Nazi Sex Ads](#) - Gay Nazi Sex Ads
- [I Hate Niggers.. Lets Kill Them](#) - Nigger killing site
- [Imperial Klans of America](#) -
- [Internet Arvan Bootboys](#) -
- [kkk.com](#) - Visit this virtual Ku Klux Klan museum filled with historical data and artifacts.
- [Klanwatch and Milita Task Force](#) - monitor extremist and militant activity throughout America and provide comprehensive updates to law enforcement agencies
- [Knights of the White Kamellia](#) -
- [Knights Of The White Kamellia- National Headquarters Page](#) - Home page for the Knights of the White Kamellia, Ku Klux Klan
- [Library. The](#) - essays, links.
- [Northwest Kinsmen](#) - The Northwest Patriot gathering place! Find out more about the Northwest Territorial Imperative.
- [Northwest Kinsmen](#) - This web site includes materials of political, religious and racial nature, and is designed to bring you information abo
- [Occupied America](#) -
- [Reactionary Right Skinheads](#) -
- [Rev White's Christian Politics](#) -
- [Skinheads Of The Racial Holy War!](#) - Skinheads
- [Usenet - alt.politics.nationalism.white](#) -
- [Usenet - alt.politics.white-power](#) -
- [Usenet alt.skinheads.moderated](#) -
- [Werwolf Records](#) - Unholy Aryan Black Metal
- [News relating to White Power](#) - TotalNews brings a summary of articles with hyperlinks on the net related to White Power
- [All White Power Newsgroups, FTP and List Servers](#) - Use Tile to find all related Newsgroups, FTP Sites and List Servers to White Power
- [Multisearch for White Power from Cyber411](#) - Sampling of Listings for White Power from 16 different search engines at once. (may take a few minutes)

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APPENDIX XII:

LEGISLATION UPDATE.

Crimes Amendment Act (No 2) 1997
 Harassment Act 1997
 Summary Offences Amendment Act 1997
 (Source: *Ten-One*, no. 157, 19 Dec. 1997)

Safer Communities
 Together! J B M

as is practicable on being required to do so by a member of the Police exercising the power conferred by subsection (1).
 (3) Every member of the Police exercising any power conferred by subsection (1) must, immediately after the vehicle has stopped, —

- (a) Identify himself or herself to the driver of the vehicle; and
- (b) Tell the driver that the power is being exercised under this section; and
- (c) If not in uniform and if so required, produce evidence that he or she is a member of the Police.
- (4) Where a vehicle fails to stop at a road block established under section 317B, subsection (1) applies and any member of the Police may, in relation to that vehicle and any person in or on it, exercise all or any of the powers conferred by the section and sections 317AA and 317AB.
- (5) For the purposes of this section, the term "unlawfully at large", in relation to any person, includes (but is not limited to) any case where a warrant for the arrest of that person is for the time being in force.

Comment

Section 317A remains largely unchanged. The purpose for stopping a vehicle under this section is to arrest any person in that vehicle who is suspected of either being "unlawfully at large" or of having committed an offence punishable by imprisonment.

"317AA. Powers incidental to stopping vehicles under section 317A — (1) Subject to section 317A(3), where any vehicle is stopped pursuant to section 317A, any member of the Police may do all or any of the following:

- (a) Require any person in or on any such vehicle to state his or her name, address, and date of birth, or such of those particulars as the member of the Police may specify;
- (b) Search the vehicle for the purpose of —
 - (i) Locating a person referred to in section 317A(1)(a); or
 - (ii) Locating property that is evidence of the commission of the offence in respect of which the vehicle is stopped pursuant to section 317A(1)(a)(iii), — if the member or any other member of the Police believes on reasonable grounds that such a person or such property, is in or on the vehicle;
- (c) Use reasonable force to enter a vehicle for the purpose of conducting a search pursuant to paragraph (b);
- (d) Require that the vehicle remain stopped for as long as is reasonably necessary to enable a member of the Police to exercise any powers conferred by this subsection, regardless of whether such powers are exercised in respect of —
 - (i) The vehicle; or
 - (ii) The occupants of the vehicle; or
 - (iii) The property in or on the vehicle.
- (2) Every member of the Police exercising any power conferred by subsection (1)(b) must, before conducting the search, tell the driver the object of the proposed search."

Comment

Section 317AA is a new provision which details the power of Police when stopping a vehicle under section 317A. Subsection (1)(a) authorises Police to request any person in the vehicle to provide their name, address and date of birth. Subsection (1)(b) authorises Police to search the vehicle for the purpose of locating either the person or property that is evidence of the commission of an offence in respect of which the vehicle

and it is envisaged that in addition to the information provided under the specific search power, all that Police are required to do is tell the driver that the vehicle is being stopped under section 314B.

"314C. Powers incidental to stopping vehicles under section 314B — (1) This section applies whenever a vehicle is stopped under section 314B.

- (2) Any member of the Police may do either or both of the following:
 - (a) Require any person in or on the vehicle to state his or her name, address, and date of birth, or such of those particulars as the member of the Police may specify;
 - (b) Require that the vehicle remain stopped for as long as is reasonably necessary to enable a statutory search power to be exercised.
- (3) This section does not limit or affect the exercise of any other power, whether express or implied, that is incidental to the applicable statutory search power."

Comment

Whenever a vehicle is stopped for the purpose of exercising a statutory search power, Police may request the name, address and date of birth of each person in that vehicle. In addition, Police may require the vehicle to remain stopped for as long as is necessary to search it.

"314D. Offences relating to stopping vehicles under section 314B — (1) Every person commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction a fine not exceeding \$1,000 who, without reasonable excuse, —

- (a) Fails to stop as soon as is practicable when required to do so by a member of the Police exercising the power conferred by section 314B(1); or
- (b) Fails to comply with a requirement made by a member of the Police under paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) of section 314C(2).
- (2) Any member of the Police may arrest without warrant any person whom the member of the Police has good cause to suspect has committed an offence against subsection (1)."

Comment

Every person commits an offence who fails to stop pursuant to section 314B, fails to provide details or fails to remain stopped. Subsection (2) contains a specific power to arrest for offences against subsection (1).

53. New sections substituted — The principal Act is amended by repealing section 317A (as inserted by section 3 of the Crimes Amendment Act (No. 2) 1993), and substituting the following sections:

"317A. Power to stop vehicles for purpose of arrest —

- (1) Any member of the Police who —
 - (a) Has reasonable grounds to suspect that there is in or on any vehicle any person who either —
 - (i) Is unlawfully at large; or
 - (ii) Has committed an offence punishable by imprisonment; and
 - (b) Either —
 - (i) Is wearing a uniform or a distinctive cap, hat, or helmet with a badge of authority affixed thereto; or
 - (ii) Is following immediately behind the vehicle in a motor vehicle displaying flashing blue lights, or flashing blue and red lights, and sounding a siren —
- (2) A person driving a vehicle must stop the vehicle as soon

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LEGISLATION UPDATE

THE NEW ZEALAND POLICE LEGAL SECTION

No 2, December 1997

Crimes Amendment Act (No 2) 1997

Participation in a Criminal Gang; and Powers to Stop and Search Vehicles

Comment

This legislation update covers the Crimes Amendment Act (No. 2) 1997. The amendments contained in this update include the new offence of "participation in a criminal gang" and secondly, amended powers to stop and search vehicles.

These come into effect from 1 January 1998.

38. New heading and section inserted — The (Crimes Act 1961) is hereby amended by inserting in Part XI, after section 93, the following heading and section:

"Participation in a criminal gang

93A. Participation in criminal gang (1) In this section —
 "Criminal gang" means any organisation, association, or group (whether formal or informal) of 3 or more persons where —

- (a) At least 3 of the members have each been convicted of the commission or attempted commission of a least 1 serious offence (together referred to in paragraphs (b) and (c) as the 3 qualifying offences); and
- (b) The 3 qualifying offences were committed on separate occasions; and
- (c) At least 1 of the qualifying offences was committed within the 3 years immediately preceding the alleged commission of the offence under this section:

"Member" includes any person —

- (a) Who is a prospective or associate member of a gang; or
- (b) Who acts at the direction of, or in association with, any member of a gang;

"Serious offence" means —

- (a) An offence punishable by a period of imprisonment for a term of 10 years or more; or
- (b) An offence against any of the following provisions of this Act:
 - (i) Section 116 (conspiring to defeat justice);
 - (ii) Section 117 (Corrupting juries and witnesses);
 - (iii) Section 188(2) (wounding with intent);
 - (iv) Section 189(2) (injuring with intent);
 - (v) Section 191(2) (aggravated injury);
 - (vi) Section 227A(ba) (theft);
 - (vii) Section 257A (money laundering);
 - (viii) Section 258 (receiving property dishonestly obtained); or
- (c) An offence against section 6 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975; or
- (d) An offence against section 54 or section 55 of the Arms Act 1983.

(2) Every one is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years who —

- (a) Participates in a criminal gang knowing that it is a

criminal gang; and

- (b) Intentionally promotes or furthers any conduct by any member of that gang that amounts to an offence or offences punishable by imprisonment.
- (3) In any prosecution for an offence against subsection (2), it is not necessary for the prosecution to prove for the purposes of paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) of that subsection that the accused has committed any other offence, or that the accused was a party within the meaning of section 66 to any particular offence committed by any other person.
- (4) In any prosecution for any offence against subsection (2), it is not necessary for the prosecution to prove for the purposes of paragraph (b) of that subsection that —
 - (a) The accused knew or intended that any particular offence would be committed by any member of the criminal gang;
 - (b) The accused promoted or furthered the commission of any particular offence;
 - (c) Any member has been convicted of any offence in respect of particular conduct.
- (5) Without limiting the manner in which the prosecution can prove that the accused knew that the gang was a criminal gang, it is sufficient if the prosecution proves that a member of the Police had warned the accused on at least 2 separate occasions that the gang was a criminal gang."

Comment

The offence of "participation in a criminal gang" does not simply make membership of a gang unlawful. However, it seems pitched somewhat wider than being a "party" to an offence under section 66 of the Crimes Act. The offence is an attempt to target those gang members who encourage others to commit offences, but are not themselves responsible for the crime.

The basic elements of the offence are:

- Every one is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years who:
 - Participates in any criminal gang knowing that it is a criminal gang;
 - And intentionally promotes or furthers any conduct by any member of that gang that amounts to an offence or offences punishable by imprisonment;
 - "Criminal Gang" is defined as a group of 3 or more persons where at least 3 members of the group have each been convicted of a serious offence (as listed in subsection (1)).
- The prosecution do not have to prove that the accused was a party to a particular offence, or knew or intended/promoted the commission of a particular offence.
- The offender is deemed to know that the gang was a "criminal gang" if he has been

warned on at least two occasions that the gang is a "criminal gang".

38D. Power to search vehicles for goods stolen or obtained by crimes involving dishonesty—The [Crimes Act] is amended by inserting, after section 227A (as so inserted), the following section:

"227B (1) Any member of the Police who has reasonable grounds for believing that any property that is stolen or obtained by a crime involving dishonesty is in or on any vehicle may, without warrant, search the vehicle for the purpose of locating that property.

(2) Any member of the Police conducting a search under subsection (1) may use reasonable force, if necessary, to effect entry to the vehicle.

(3) During a search under subsection (1), any member of the Police may seize any property that is—

(a) Stolen or obtained by a crime involving dishonesty; and

(b) Found in or on the vehicle.

(4) Every member of the Police must, before conducting a search under subsection (1),—

(a) Identify himself or herself to any person in or on the vehicle; and

(b) If he or she is not in uniform and if so required, produce evidence that he or she is a member of the Police; and

(c) Tell any person in or on the vehicle that the search is being conducted under this section."

Comment

This section introduces a power for Police to search without warrant for stolen property or property obtained by a "crime involving dishonesty" (defined in the Crimes Act as any crime coming within section 217 to 292 of the Crimes Act). The new power relates only to searching vehicles. Police are authorised to use reasonable force to enter the vehicle and may seize any such property located. Before searching, Police must identify themselves to any person in or on the vehicle, and if not in uniform, must produce ID if required. Police must inform any person in or on the vehicle that the search is being conducted under section 227B of the Crimes Act.

52A. New heading and sections inserted—The principal Act is amended by inserting, after section 314, the following heading and sections:

"General Power to Stop Vehicles to Exercise Statutory Search Powers

"314A. Statutory search power (1) For the purposes of sections 314B and 314C, a "statutory search power" means any power conferred by statute that expressly authorises any member of the Police to search a vehicle, but does not include a power that itself authorises any member of the Police to stop a vehicle.

(2) A power conferred by statute describe in subsection (1) is a statutory search power for the purposes of sections 314B and 314C whether or not the power conferred by statute—

(a) Involves the issue of a warrant;

(b) Authorises any other person to exercise the power;

(3) For the purposes of this section and section 314B and 314C, the term "vehicle" does not include any aircraft, hovercraft, ship or ferry or other vessel, train, or carriage."

Comment

Sections 314A to 314D clarify the situation where Police have a specific power to search a vehicle, but where that search power does not specifically allow Police to stop the vehicle in order to carry out the search. This follows the Court of Appeal ruling in *R v Pearce and Fagan* (1996) which held that because section 18 of the Misuse of Drugs Act does not specifically authorise Police to stop vehicles for the purpose of search, then no power to stop the vehicle can be implied in that section.

"314B. General power to stop vehicles—(1) Any member of the Police may stop a vehicle for the purposes of conducting a search under a statutory search power if the member of the Police is satisfied that,—

(a) In respect of a statutory search power to search without a warrant, the ground or grounds, as the case may be, for exercising that statutory search power, as set out in the applicable statute, exist; or

(b) In respect of a statutory search power to search with a warrant, the warrant has been issued and is in force.

(2) Any member of the Police who stops a vehicle under subsection (1) must—

(a) Be wearing a uniform or distinctive cap, hat or helmet with a badge of authority affixed to that cap, hat, or helmet; or

(b) Be following immediately behind the vehicle in a motor vehicle displaying flashing blue lights, or flashing blue and red lights, and sounding a siren.

(3) A person driving a vehicle must stop the vehicle as soon as is practicable on being required to do so by a member of the Police exercising the stopping power conferred by subsection (1).

(4) Every member of the Police exercising the stopping power conferred by subsection (1) must, immediately after the vehicle has stopped,—

(a) Identify himself or herself to the driver of the vehicle; and

(b) Tell the driver that the stopping power is being exercised under this section for the purpose of exercising a statutory search power; and

(c) Tell the driver the statutory search power in respect of which the stopping power is being exercised; and

(d) If not in uniform and is so required, produce evidence that he or she is a member of the Police.

(5) Subsection (4) does not limit any other duties that a member of the Police must carry out when exercising the applicable statutory search power.

(6) Despite subsection (5), a member of the Police need not carry out any duty that is contained in the applicable statutory search power if that duty is exactly the same as the duty contained in subsection (4).

(7) This section does not limit or affect the powers of any person other than a member of the Police under any power of search conferred by statute."

Comment

Whenever the grounds exist for exercising a power to search a vehicle, Police may rely on section 314B to stop that vehicle for the purpose of carrying out that search. Police must either be in uniform or use red and blue flashing lights and siren (the same criteria which exist under section 66 of the Transport Act and section 317A of the Crimes Act). The requirements contained in subsection (4) are in effect very similar to the requirements when exercising a statutory power of search,

was stopped. Before searching under this section, Police must have "reasonable grounds to believe" either the person or property are in the vehicle. Before searching, Police must tell the driver the object of the proposed search.

"317AB. Offences relating to stopping vehicles under section 317A—(1) Every person commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 who, without reasonable excuse,—

(a) Fails to stop as soon as is practicable when required to do so by a member of the Police exercising the power conferred by section 317A(1); or

(b) Fails to comply with a requirement made by a member of the Police under paragraph (a) or paragraph (d) of section 317A(1).

(2) Any member of the Police may arrest without warrant any person whom the member of the Police has good cause to suspect has committed an offence against subsection (1)."

Comment

It is an offence to fail to stop or to fail to provide details under section 317A. Police may arrest any person for an offence under this section.

"54. Road Blocks—(1) Section 317B of the principal Act (as inserted by section 3 of the Crimes Amendment Act (No 2) 1993) is amended by omitting from subsection (4) the words "subsection (5) and (6)", and substituting the words "subsection (5)".

(2) Section 317B of the principal Act (as so inserted) is amended by repealing paragraph (c) of subsection (4), and substituting the following paragraph:

"(c) Require any person in or on any such vehicle to state his or her name, address, and date of birth, or such of those particulars as the member of the Police may specify."

(3) Section 317B of the principal Act (as so inserted) is amended by repealing subsection (6).

(3A) Section 317B(7) of the principal Act (as so inserted) is amended by inserting, before the word "conviction", the word "summary".

(4) Section 317B of the principal Act (as so inserted) is amended by inserting, after subsection (7), the following subsection:

(7A) Any member of the Police may arrest without warrant any person whom the member of the Police has good cause to suspect has committed an offence against subsection (7)."

Comment

Section 317B relates to establishing road blocks and is amended by providing authority for Police to request the "date of birth" of every person stopped as well as that person's name and address. The section is further amended by providing a power to arrest any person for failing to stop or failing to provide details under section 317B.

"38A. Powers in respect of crime against 202A—Section 202B of the [Crimes Act 1961] is amended by inserting, after subsection (2), the following subsections:

"(2A) If it is necessary for any constable to stop a vehicle for the purpose of exercising the power conferred by subsection (1)(a) to search a person who is in the vehicle, section 314B to 314D apply with any necessary modification as if references in those sections

section (1)(a)."

"(2B) Despite section 314B, sections 314B to 314D apply to the exercise of the power to stop a vehicle conferred by subsection (1)(d)."

65A. Amendments to other enactments—The enactments specified in Schedule 1A are amended in the manner indicated in that schedule.

SCHEDULE 1A

AMENDMENTS TO OTHER ENACTMENTS

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 by inserting in section 18, after subsection (3), the following subsection:

"(3A) If it is necessary for a member of the Police to stop a vehicle for the purposes of exercising the power conferred by subsection (3) to search a person who is in the vehicle, sections 314B to 314D of the Crimes Act 1961 apply with any necessary modifications as if references in those sections to a statutory power are references to subsection (3)."

The Arms Act 1983 by inserting in section 60(1), after paragraph (a), the following paragraph:

"(aa) Use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of effecting entry to the vehicle, and for breaking open any package or other thing to which paragraph (a) relates; and"

The Arms Act 1983 by inserting in section 60, after subsection (1), the following subsections:

"(1A) If it is necessary for a member of the Police to stop a vehicle for the purpose of exercising the power conferred by subsection (1) to search a person who is in the vehicle, sections 314B to 314D of the Crimes Act apply with any necessary modifications as if references in those sections to a statutory search power are references to the power to search a person under subsection (1)."

"(1B) Subsection (1A) does not limit the application of section 314A to 314B of the Crimes Act 1961 in respect of the stopping of any vehicle for the purpose of exercising the power to search the vehicle under subsection (1)."

Comment—The effect of the above changes are that if Police have a power to search any person under either the Crimes Act (section 202B), Misuse of Drugs Act (section 18(3)), or the Arms Act (section 60), and that person is in a vehicle, Police have the power to stop the vehicle to carry out the search. Once the vehicle has been stopped, Police are able to rely on sections 314B to 314D to obtain the details of each person in the vehicle.

RECORD BEFORE REVIEW: A 16-year-old Japanese national was interviewed for the theft of a bicycle, aided by an interpreter. Having confirmed the offender wanted to review the conversation, the CIU constable quickly discovered that it helps to push the cassette into the recorder first. Needless to say, the interview was conducted to comply.

LEGISLATION UPDATE

THE NEW ZEALAND POLICE LEGAL SECTION

No 3, December 1997

Harassment Act 1997

Comment
This legislation update covers the new offence of "criminal harassment" contained in the Harassment Act 1997. The second part of that Act deals with civil restraining orders, and does not come into effect until 1 May 1998. Civil harassment will be updated early next year.
The new offence of "criminal harassment" comes into effect from 1 January 1998.

3. Meaning of "harassment" — (1) For the purposes of this Part and Parts 2 to 4, a person harasses another person if he or she engages in a pattern of behaviour that is directed against that other person, being a pattern of behaviour that includes doing any specified act in the other person on at least 2 separate occasions within a period of 12 months.
(2) To avoid any doubt, —

- (a) The specified Acts required for the purposes of subsection (1) may be the same type of specified act on each separate occasion, or different types of specified acts;
- (b) The specified acts need not be done to the same person on each separate occasion, as long as the pattern of behaviour is directed against the same person.

Comment
Harassment requires a pattern of behaviour, not just a single act. It requires some form of on-going behaviour which includes doing a "specified act" on at least two occasions within 12 months. The term "specified act" is defined in section 4.

4. Meaning of "specified act" — (1) For the purposes of this Part and Parts 2 to 4, a specified act, in relation to a person, means any of the following acts:

- (a) Watching, loitering near, or preventing or hindering access to or from, that person's place of residence, business, employment, or any other place that the person frequents for any purpose;
- (b) Following, stopping, or accosting that person;
- (c) Entering, or interfering with, property in that person's possession;
- (d) Making contact with that person (whether by telephone, correspondence, or in any other way);
- (e) Giving offensive material to that person, or leaving it where it will be found by, given to, or brought to the attention of, that person;
- (f) Acting in any other way —
 - (i) That causes that person ("person A") to fear for his or her safety; and
 - (ii) That would cause a reasonable person in person A's particular circumstances to fear for his or her safety.

(2) To avoid any doubt, subsection (1)(f) includes the situation where —

- (a) A person acts in a particular way; and
- (b) The act is done in relation to a person ("person B") in

circumstances in which the act is to be regarded, in accordance with section 6(b), as done to another person ("person A"); and

- (c) Acting in that way —
 - (i) Causes person A to fear for his or her safety; and
 - (ii) Would cause a reasonable person in person A's particular circumstances to fear for his or her safety. —
Whether or not acting in that way causes or is likely to cause person B to fear for person B's safety.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not limit the generality of subsection (1)(f).

Comment
A person harasses another person if they engage in a pattern of behaviour which involves doing a "specified act" on at least two occasions within a 12 month period. The definition of "specified act" is based on the non-contact provisions contained in section 19(2) of the Domestic Violence Act. The definition includes a very wide range of behaviour, but note that criminal liability arises only if the further requirements contained in section 6 are met.

5. Meaning of act "done to" a person — An act is done to a person ("person A"), for the purposes of this Part and Parts 2 to 4, if that act is done —

- (a) In relation to person A; and
- (b) In relation to any other person ("person B") with whom person A is in a family relationship, and the doing of the act is due, wholly or partly, to person A's family relationship with person B.

Comment
The behaviour which constitutes harassment need not be specifically done to the intended victim. For example, if the behaviour is directed at A's partner or child, with the intent that this impacts on A, this will constitute harassment of A.

Object

6. Object — (1) The object of this Part and Parts 2 to 4 is to provide greater protection to victims of harassment by —
(a) Recognising that behaviour that may appear innocent or trivial when viewed in isolation may amount to harassment when viewed in context; and

- (b) Ensuring that there is adequate legal protection for all victims of harassment.

(2) This Part and Parts 2 to 4 aim to achieve their object by —

- (a) Making the most serious types of harassment a criminal offence;
- (b) Empowering the Court to make orders to protect victims of harassment who are not covered by domestic violence legislation;
- (c) Providing effective sanctions for breaches of the criminal and civil law relating to harassment.

LEGISLATION UPDATE

THE NEW ZEALAND POLICE LEGAL SECTION

No 4, December 1997

Summary Offences Amendment Act 1997

Comment

This legislation update covers amendments resulting from the Summary Offences Amendment Act 1997. The amendments include:

- Two new association type offences;
- Changes to the offence of "intimidation" (section 21);
- Increase in fines for offences under the Summary Offences Act.

These amendments come into effect from 1 January 1998.

85. Interpretation — Section 2(1) of the (Summary Offences Act) is amended by inserting, in their appropriate alphabetical order, the following definitions:

"Crime involving violence" means an offence against any of the provisions listed in Schedule 3;

"Serious drug offence" means an offence against any of the provisions listed in Schedule 4;

Comment

These two definitions relate to the two new offences of "associating with violent offenders" (section 6A) and "associating with serious drug offenders" (section 6B). The specific offences which constitute "crimes involving violence" and "serious drug offences" are set out in the schedules below.

86. Associating with convicted thieves — Section 6 of the (Summary Offences Act) is amended by inserting, after subsection (2), the following subsection:

"(2A) To avoid any doubt, if a person who is a convicted thief habitually associates with another convicted thief in the circumstances specified in subsection (1), this section does not prevent 1 or both of those persons from being charged with an offence under this section."

Comment

The new subsection (2A) clarifies that where two persons are charged with an offence under this section.

Harassment Act 1997, cont'd

(3) Any Court which, or any person who, exercises any power conferred by or under the Part or Parts 2 to 4 must be guided in the exercise of that power by the object specified in subsection (1).

Comment

The object of the Act is to provide greater legal protection to victims of harassment. Section 6(1)(a) specifically notes that behaviour which appears trivial if viewed in isolation may amount to "harassment" for the purposes of the Act. "Criminal harassment" involves the most serious types of harassment, while protection will be put in place to deal with less serious forms of harassment.

7. Act to bind the Crown — This Part and Parts 2 to 4 bind the Crown.

PART 2 CRIMINAL HARASSMENT

8. Criminal harassment — (1) Every person commits an offence who harasses another person, in any case where —

- (a) The first mentioned person intends that harassment to cause that other person to fear for —
 - (i) That other person's safety; or
 - (ii) The safety of any person with whom that other person is in a family relationship; or
- (b) The first mentioned person knows that the harassment is likely to cause the other person, given his or her particular circumstances, to reasonably fear for

- (i) That other person's safety; or
- (ii) That safety of any person whom that other person is in a family relationship.

(2) Every person who commits an offence against this section is liable, on summary, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years.

Comment

The object of the new offence of "criminal harassment" is to provide protection from behaviour which constitutes the most serious types of harassment. Note that an offence may be committed under (1)(a) or (1)(b), each section having distinctly separate elements:

- Section 1(Xa) is where the offender harasses another person and "intends" to cause the victim to fear for their safety, or the safety of a person with whom they have a family relationship;
- Section 1(Xb) is quite different from 1(Xa):
 - (i) Firstly, section 1(Xb) lowers the level of intent to "recklessness". Therefore, the offender need not actually intend to cause the person to fear for their safety. It is enough if they knew that their behaviour would be likely to have that effect;
 - (ii) Secondly, section 1(Xb) takes account of the victim's particular circumstances. It recognises that some people will be more easily frightened than others. It establishes a subjective element when considering the effect of the behaviour on the victim.

The penalty for "criminal harassment" is imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years ■

sons associate in circumstances which constitute an offence under section 6 of the Act, then both may be charged under that section.

87. New sections inserted — The [Summary Offences Act] is hereby amended by inserting, after section 6, the following sections:

6A. Associating with violent offenders —

(1) Every person commits an offence against this section who habitually associates with a violent offender in circumstances from which it can reasonably be inferred that the association will lead to the commission of a crime involving violence by that person or any such offender.

(2) No information for an offence against this section may be laid unless —

(a) The defendant has been warned by any constable on at least 3 separate occasions that his or her continued association with the violent offender may lead to a charge being brought against him or her under this section; and

(b) Every warning under paragraph (a) in respect of an association with a violent offender is given not more than 7 years after the date of that violent offender's last conviction for a crime involving violence.

(3) This section does not apply in respect of any habitual association between 2 persons in either of the following circumstances:

(a) Where a protection order is in force under the Domestic Violence Act 1995, and that order is for the benefit of 1 of those 2 persons and applies against the other of those 2 persons;

(b) Where —

(i) Both persons are, or have been, in a domestic relationship (as defined by section 4 of that Act) with each other; and

(ii) The crimes involving violence, the commission of which can reasonably be inferred from that association, are crimes that will be committed by 1 of those persons against the other person, or by 1 of those persons against a third person who is in a domestic relationship (as so defined) with the other person.

(4) To avoid any doubt, if a person who is a violent offender habitually associates with another violent offender in the circumstances specified in subsection (1), this section does not prevent 1 or both of those persons from being charged with an offence under this section.

(5) Every person who commits an offence against this section is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or a fine not exceeding \$2,000.

(6) In this section "violent offender" means a person who has been convicted on at least 2 separate occasions of a crime involving violence.

Comment

The new offence of "associating with violent offenders" is based on the existing offence of "associating with convicted thieves" contained in section 6. The same elements of the offence are contained in the new section which relates to violent crime as opposed to "crimes involving dishonesty". Note that a "violent offender" is defined in subsection (6) as a person who has been convicted on 2 previous occasions as opposed to the 3 previous convictions needed in section 6(3).

6B. Associating with serious drug offenders (1)
Every person commits an offence against this section who habitually associates with a serious drug offender in circumstances from which it can reasonably be inferred that the association will lead to the commission of a serious drug offence by that person or any such offender.

(1A) This section does not apply in respect of a serious drug offence against —

(a) Section 6 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 in relation to a Class C controlled drug specified or described in Part I of the Third Schedule of that Act (other than *caltha edulis* plant or *coccoloba* leaf); or

(b) Section 9 of that Act in relation to a prohibited plant of the genus *Cannabis*, — unless the serious drug offence involved dealing with a substantial amount of that drug or cultivation of that drug on a substantial scale, as the case may be.

(2) No information for an offence against this section may be laid unless —

(a) The defendant has been warned by any constable on at least 3 separate occasions that his or her continued association with the serious drug offender may lead to a charge being brought against him or her under this section; and

(b) Every warning under paragraph (a) in respect of an association with a serious drug offender is given not more than 7 years after the date of that serious drug offender's last conviction for a serious drug offence.

(3) To avoid any doubt, if a person who is a serious drug offender habitually associates with another serious drug offender in the circumstances specified in subsection (1), this section does not prevent 1 or both of those persons from being charged with an offence under this section.

(4) Every person who commits an offence against this section is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or a fine not exceeding \$2,000.

(5) In this section "serious drug offender" means a person who has been convicted on at least 2 separate occasions of a serious drug offence.

Comment

The offence of "associating with serious drug offenders" is also based on the existing offence of associating with convicted thieves contained in section 6 of the Summary Offences Act. Note that in relation to previous convictions for Class C controlled drug offences, only those convictions which involved a "substantial" amount of cannabis will qualify for previous conviction purposes (6B(1A)).

6C. Proof of habitual association —

(1) In proceeding for an offence against section 6 or section 6A or section 6B, the prosecution may prove that the association was a habitual association by proving that, —

(a) On at least 3 separate occasions, a constable gave the defendant a warning that satisfies the requirement of —

(i) Section 6(2), in the case of an offence against section 6; or

(ii) Section 6A(2), in the case of an offence against section 6A; or

(iii) Section 6B(2), in the case of an offence against section 6B; and

(b) All 3 warnings were given within a period of 2 years.

(2) Subsection (1) does not limit the manner in which the

prosecution may prove that the association was a habitual association."

Comment

The association offences prohibit "habitual association" with the specified class of persons (being those with relevant previous convictions). In order to establish that the offender habitually associated with the convicted person, section 6C provides that evidence of having warned the person on 3 previous occasions shall in itself be deemed to be proof of the existence of an "habitual association".

88. Intimidation — The [Summary Offences Act] is amended by repealing section 21, and substituting the following section:

"21. (1) Every person commits an offence who, with intent to frighten or intimidate any other person, or knowing that his or her conduct is likely to cause that other person reasonably to be frightened or intimidated, —

(a) Threatens to injure that other person or any member of his or her family, or to damage any of that person's property; or

(b) Follows that other person; or

(c) Hides any property owned or used by that other person or deprives that person of, or hinders that person in the use of, that property; or

(d) Watches or loiters near the house or other place, or the approach to the house or other place, where that other person lives, or works, or carries on business, or happens to be; or

(e) Stops, confronts, or accosts that other person in any public place.

(2) Every person commits an offence who forcibly hinders or prevents any person from working at or exercising any lawful trade, business, or occupation.

(3) Every person who commits an offence against this section is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or a fine not exceeding \$2,000."

Comment

Section 21 of the Summary Offences Act contains the offence of "intimidation". This section has been replaced by the new section 21 above. Note that the level of intent required has been lowered to "recklessness" as to whether the victim was frightened. The prosecution need only show that the offender knew his or her conduct was likely to cause the victim reasonably to be frightened. The second part of the offence of intimidation contained in section 21 is quite separate from the first, and involves forcibly hindering any person from working, etc. There is a power to arrest for an offence under section 21, with the penalty of 3 months imprisonment or fine not exceeding \$2,000.

88A. New schedules added — The [Summary Offences Act] is hereby amended by adding the schedules set out [below].

New schedules added to Summary Offences Act 1981

**SCHEDULE 3
CRIMES INVOLVING VIOLENCE**

Provisions of the Crimes Act 1961

87 Riot
90 Riotous damage

128	Sexual violation
129	Attempt to commit sexual violation
167, 168	Murder
171	Manslaughter
173	Attempt to murder
188(1)	Wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm
189(2)	Wounding with intent to injure, or with reckless disregard for safety of others
191(1)	Aggravated wounding
191(2)	Aggravated injury
192	Aggravated assault
193	Assault with intent to injure
198A	Using any firearm against law enforcement officer, etc.
198B	Commission of crime with firearm
199	Acid throwing
202C	Assault with weapon
209	Kidnapping
234	Robbery
235	Aggravated robbery
237	Assault with intent to rob
294	Arson
296	Damage to other property by fire or explosive
298	Willful damage
Provisions of the Arms Act 1983	
54	Use or attempted use of firearm, etc., to commit resist or prevent arrest, or commit offence
55	Carrying firearm, etc., with criminal intent

**SCHEDULE 4
SERIOUS DRUG OFFENCES**

Provisions of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975	
6(1)	Dealing with controlled drugs
6(2A)	Conspiracy to deal with controlled drugs
9	Cultivation of prohibited plants
10	Aiding offences against corresponding law of another country
11	Theft, etc., of controlled drugs
12	Use of premises or vehicle"

89. Fines increased — The [Summary Offences Act] is amended in the manner indicated in Schedule 3.

Comment

Fines contained in the Summary Offences Act have been increased with most having been doubled. ■

Call of the Cray

With the threat of five front line vacancies in the Northland town of Kaitiaki next year, Senior Sergeant Gordon Gunn set to work with a novel bid to recruit staff.

In a dedicated yet slightly underhand fashion, Gordon distributed enticing photographs of succulent Northland crayfish, beautiful sandy beaches and abundant fish to stations throughout the country.

Taking the bait, inquiries came from 12 officers throughout the country.

Five applied for the positions — one from Porirua, and the rest from South, West and Central Auckland. Gordon's job to have new staff on the beat by January. ■